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THE HERITAGE OF WOMEN

BY

ALICE AMES WINTER

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TO MY HUSBAND

8466

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THE HERITAGE OF WOMEN

THE HERITAGE OF WOMEN

Chapter I

WOMEN AND EACH OTHER

THE old words, "Love o' Women," sometimes spoken with tenderness, sometimes with a slur, have carried with them the inference of the passion of man and woman. Nowadays another half is being added to make the whole—the love of women for women. Not a small element of life is this. It shows big in the vast amount of social life between women. It looms in the enormous organizations of women. One goes into the clubhouses or the headquarters or the offices of such groups and is instantly aware of the laughter and friendliness of atmosphere that surround this working together and hobnobbing of woman with woman. In the last fifty years or so they seem to have discovered each other with great satisfaction.

A new thing in the world, say some. Then, like a swift dart there smites one the ancient outpouring of Ruth to Naomi, perhaps the loveliest expression of enduring loyalty ever spoken. So the love of woman for woman is not new! Nevertheless, it has grown wider and stronger, parallel with that leveling up process that, for want of a more closely analytic phrase, we call the spread of democratic relations.

If fortune has led a woman, here and there, to go far and wide and to talk with multitudes of women; women in cities and in far off lonely places behind desert mountains;

college girls and those who speak broken English or stumble in their grammar; southerners and northerners; from Main Street or from Beacon Hill; Democrats and Republicans and Bolshevists; women who work and those who idle; women with whom one plunges deep into international questions and those beside whom one sits on the front porch and discusses croup or the best recipe for Washington pie, then Love o' Women becomes very real. Pin pricks and littlenesses there are, of course, to be laughed over, but these are small things compared with a vast affection for them all.

Then one remembers Ruth in the fields of Boaz. Space widens to far away times. There have always been these women—if one could know them.

There is a delightful personal side to all of it, the pleasure of making good friends with a myriad of our own kind; charming acquaintances in many lands and in many ages; in different varieties of clothes and with widely different ways of speaking and acting, but not so different that they are un-understandable; our own kind, after all, the glorious company of women; additions to our list of friends. That is their greatest witchery. When one knows them one feels like saying, "May I introduce my friend, Aspasia of Miletus," or, "my friend, Catarina Cornaro," or, "my friend, Joan of Arc," or, perchance, "Anna Dickinson," as the case may be. All along through the years and the ages they come to call. It is the pleasure of having sometimes intimate, sometimes nodding acquaintances with friends scattered through the centuries and over the earth. They stand there waiting for any one of you until it is your whim to indulge in the pleasure of their society, and when you are tired of them you can leave them with no apologies for rudeness. They do not change, although sometimes they are puzzling, tremendously puzzling, and therefore interesting. And you do not have to feel alike about them all.

You have likes and dislikes perhaps as instinctive and unreasoning as those you have for living friends.

Of course every age, especially when it is quite unaware of any period except itself, thinks itself very important and considers itself unique. But, after all, we are of much greater significance when we see ourselves as part of a whole bigger than ourselves. So to find that what women are doing today is not queer, not erratic, not a mere tangential outbreak; that it is not even new; that it is a part of a consecutive movement as old as the ages, is well worth while.

It has become rather a fashion, in these latter days, to say—with that superiority that shows how much more clever we are than our forebears—that women have ceased to be mysterious. They are just human beings, with the inference, forsooth, that being humans means being cut out of clearly understood patterns. The veils have been lifted and truth is displayed naked and unashamed. As a matter of fact, each one of us is mysterious to himself or herself as an individual, perplexing and even startling when we find ourselves stumbling upon thoughts and qualities that we had not dreamed that we possessed, though they have evidently been lying fallow in us for a long time. Again, each sex is a mystery to itself en masse. Third, and most of all, each sex is a perpetual enigma to the other, with a persistent lure that is partly entrancement and partly antagonism, both so jumbled that we are puzzled as to where one leaves off and the other begins, although the border line is the most fascinating of all human paths. We decide that life is rapturous only when we spend it with one of the other sex; then immediately we cry to heaven concerning the strange, erratic, and illogical ways of this being to whom we cling fast and long.

There is nothing more captivating than a puzzle. People who contrive a new one, even one mechanical, get rich.

But God invented the one that never fails when He made them male and female. Perhaps some archangel has unraveled it. If so, he is bored.

Moreover, as time slips by, these enigmas, instead of becoming less, grow more perplexing as we become aware that each of us is intricate and delicately adjusted. Whenever we burst open the door of mystery, we find ourselves in a room surrounded by innumerable more doors, each labeled "Another Mystery," and we can batter at only a few of them.

Women have always been under the handicap of mystery number three. They have been interpreted to the world and to themselves chiefly by men until times very close to our own twentieth century. From far off Sappho down to Mme. de Stael and Fanny Burney, women have generally heeded the injunction to keep silence. One has to search diligently in the by-paths of literature to find an occasional word uttered by women about themselves. Yet during these ages of feminine taciturnity they have been extraordinarily interesting subjects of discussion by their husbands and fathers, abused for being unlike men, abused when they were in danger (if they ever were) of becoming like men; objects of perennial and recurring curiosity, always a problem even unto the magazine eruptions of today where they still seem to require examination from every known and newly discovered angle, and where—one says it with tender laughter—it is generally assumed that only men understand women.

Probably it began shortly after Adam and Eve went forth from the Garden and found other people. There is no authentic story of how the others got there, but it is evident that the boys found girls to marry, and there was society. So, while their wives were abroad hunting firewood or at home making the beds of dried leaves, one can imagine a group of those early gentlemen seated on the lee side of

a big rock and engaged in inaugurating the discussion of the eternal feminine. It is to be supposed that Adam was the wisest. He was the oldest. We like to associate wisdom with hoary locks. The ancient Book, however, makes no mention of his wisdom but contents itself by telling us that he was pliable in the hands of his wife. Undoubtedly one of the assemblage leaned forward and said, "We must keep our women from the knowledge of good and evil, lest it spoil their feminine charm." Then there was an awful silence, followed by a still more awful whisper from Adam. The others had to lean forward to hear him. What he said was, "Boys, they already know." To this there was only one possible rejoinder. It was: "Do you think they have made satisfactory use of their knowledge? In short, are they entirely admirable beings?" With respect to this the opinion was unanimous. They were not.

And immediately after this debate, Cain went out and killed Abel. But no one asked whether men had made good. Or whether the human race had made good.

Ever since then the sons of Adam have been canvassing this matter; and now the daughters of Eve have joined in. Are women a failure? Is there any chance of their becoming satisfactory? Whenever they take a stumbling forward step, does it shake the very foundations of home, society and civilization? Do women stay women?—or do they turn into men—or Saints—or vampires? Are they half the human race—or not in the race?

The changes that have been wrought in law and in society and in education as they affect women, have never been a matter of sex against sex. The most helpful hands that have been stretched out to help women have many of them been men's. A woman of today may make her courtesy of acknowledgement to masculine friends from Plato and Lucius Valerius down to her innumerable defenders of these later years. (Perhaps one of the yardsticks for meas-

uring civilization is the question: How many friends have women among men?) Conversely, some of the worst enemies of women's larger and better life have been, and still are, women.

If one may be mid-Victorian enough to quote Tennyson, never were there truer words used to describe the story of women than his:

> "I saw, wherever light illumineth,
> Beauty and anguish walking hand in hand
> The downward slope to death."
>
> "And I heard sounds of insult, shame and wrong."

Life and history, when they are resolved, are rather like a rainbow of many colors, all the way from the red of bloodshed to the blue of mysticism. And perhaps women are the violet rays, recognized only in modern times yet always powerful in the chemistry of daily living. Law and custom have been brutal to her. But over against law and custom has been something that has made existence endurable and sometimes exquisitely beautiful—the love of man for woman that kept from her the realization that she was a moral incompetent and a perpetual child—the love of woman for man that glorified her service and made it something else than slavery—the love of parent for child that masked the situation and kept them from asking which of them owned the small being to whom both bent themselves. But every once in a while the bondage of women rose and shook its ghastly chains. The spot-light fell on the dreadful truth. And more and more the fortunate and happy women began to care and care intensely to protect their less happy sisters. And men cared with them.

Still the story of woman has been told from the man's point of view, and almost always the man's point of view is that the man was the standard human being, and that

insomuch and in so far as women were different from himself they were inferior. Now it would seem that as God made half the race female and gave this second half its own characteristics of mind and soul, to get the complete human being we must add the one to the other with justice to both. Moreover, women are not a class. "Classes" are man made; they shift and change with different stages of society, aristocracy, democracy, communism. But women are always women, and they are one-half the human race. To get the whole race outlook we must have the two eternally different, and eternally dovetailing and supplementing minds and souls, both men and women. That is what we are slowly working toward.

The fact that for so long women have been portrayed chiefly by men for men, has led to the fact that they have been considered as types rather than as complicated creatures stuffed with all the contradictions and diversities of other people. In old days a woman was comparatively simple; to the Hebrew the conserver of race integrity; to the Greek statuesque, self-immolating; or to the eighteenth century doll-like. Coincident with the entrance of women writers on the scene, she becomes more intricate and more debated. We do not know all about her any more. There is not a type woman any more than there is a type man.

Naturally, too, when man did all the discussing and he was to himself the measure of the race, all variations from himself were either erratic or inferior. The hang over of this point of view broods over certain men and women to this day. There is many a man who feels he is paying a woman the highest compliment when he tells her that she "thinks like a man." Whatever her reply in words, if she knows much about herself there is, deep inside her, derisive laughter. She hopes that she thinks like a human being when it comes to mathematics or morals, but she knows that she thinks like her own sex when it comes to

valuations and standards of human relations, and she begins to suspect that her way of thinking, long neglected and still not wholly developed, is necessary to the whole, and can well be matched with that of men. She has been having a vast deal of experience, not only with men in the making, when they were babies, and with men in the unmaking when they are dotards, but also with men in their prime, particularly when they are informally themselves, either for good or bad, when they cease to play a part before the world, when they "let themselves go." Part of her wisdom has led her to sidestep masculine caprice and masculine dominion. She has become an expert acrobat. Perhaps it has been this dextrousness, this fact that he is not quite sure where to find her on the flying trapeze, that is responsible for the fascination she has exercised over men's imaginations. What a creature is this! How inexplicable! What a success when we feel warm hearted or sentimental! What a failure when we become analytic! This to men. To women, men's view of her will always awaken a sense of puzzlement. The vaudeville singer can bring down the house equally when he sings a scoffing song about wives or when he becomes tender to the point of maudlin emotion over mother. Why these two irreconcilable points of view? How can there be mothers who are all right if wives are all wrong? Men are queer folks, she says. There are innumerable manifestations of the masculine point of view that tickle the sense of humor in women. When, for example, good old John Knox was thundering Calvinism to Scotland and England, how could he but feel that the world was going to the dogs because women sat on thrones? Mary Tudor—Romanly inclined—ruled England and exiled him. Mary of Guise, French allied, proscribed him. So he fulminated in "The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women." "Of necessity it is that this monstiferous empire of women

(which among all enormities that this day do abound upon the face of the earth is most detestable and damnable) be openly and plainly declared to the world, to the end that some may repent and be saved." Then Queen Mary died, and Queen Elizabeth, the Protestant, came to the throne. Queen Elizabeth was no easy forgetter, and Knox dangled his heels waiting for a permission to return to his own land. But he began to remember that Deborah once ruled Israel to its own benefit, and that Isaiah said that "queens" should be "nursing mothers" of the church. The conclusion finally came that if God had put a female child in the line of succession to the throne, that was God's affair. He, Knox, would not have done it. But there were no more blasts of the trumpet against women. So, many times, has woman been judged by whether she fitted into the masculine scheme of things.

What are we to think about ourselves when the wise men say things so opposite? "There is nothing fixed, enduring, vital, in the feelings of women; their attachments are so many pretty bows of ribbon." Or "women give entirely to their affections, set their whole fortune on the die, lose themselves eagerly in the glory of their husbands and children."

These obiter dicta might be multiplied a hundred thousand fold. One begins to suspect that even masculine judgments are sometimes tinged with that supposedly feminine characteristic that bases a generality on personal experience. But perhaps that weakness belongs to both sexes alike and is merely human. Perhaps there are as many kinds of women as there are of men.

This book makes no pretense of solving the unsolvable woman. It is merely an introduction to a long succession of those friends of other days, with the suggestion that inferences may be drawn. Today, with its much discussed womanhood, that fills some of us with heart sinking trepi-

dation lest all be lost, and makes some others of us bubble with Valkyrie-like exultation, is not, after all, a merely modern outburst, volcanic, upsetting and obliterating, but is the result of a long push. There have been from the beginning, myriads of women who have longed for a share in the big thoughts and the big jobs of the world. Generally they have lived under every handicap that men have had, race or social handicaps, and in addition they have had a thousand disadvantages all their own. A few exploded like fireworks. By beauty or cunning or by the sheer force of personal will they got through the crust and emerged. They "made good." They made bad. They were phenomenal queens or courtesans or what you will. But behind them, silent, were ten thousand times ten thousand who took the mold of the civilization of their times and yet have moved steadily on, until today we seem to be gathering all the efforts of those shadowy women into something that is taking form as a complete whole. These were not the superbly ambitious and dominant, nor yet the gorgeous creatures who made their sex a means of personal triumph. They are the nearer to the rest of us because they were simpler women.

When we step into the Far Away, there are three races, yes four, that laid our foundations. The Hebrew gave us our religion; the Greek gave us our standards of thought and beauty; the Roman gave us our law and order; the wandering barbarians of Europe gave us our prejudices and traditions, what might almost be called our subconscious selves. Their women are worth knowing.

In outline—there were great women in the very ancient world, and their own ages recognized their greatness and gave it one way of expression; namely, self-immolation. If you were a woman and you would be a notable and noble woman, you would choose the path of self-sacrifice. For a thousand generations not only for the exceptional but for

the little humble woman, the path lay through giving up. It was the lesson, to its own time, of the under dog, the slave. Now we know that self-sacrifice is the greatest lesson a human being can learn. Perhaps, for the sake of the race, it was well worth while for woman to go through those ages of abasement, provided—and this is a big *provided*—she can still and forever keep deep in her that foundation for all her later activities and her growing power.

Roman women began to see that to gain freedom—and they coveted personal dignity and liberty—they must establish certain property rights and marriage privileges. They did both. Theirs is the thrilling story of the struggle to be real people.

With Christianity conquering Europe, there came the exaltation of a new set of virtues, not only the masculine virtues of honor and heroism, but the feminine ones of loving-kindness, chastity, humility. Now there comes on the scene one of the most remarkable groups of women this old world has ever seen. The early Christian devotees took the freedom and wealth their Pagan Roman sisters had gained, and used it for consecrated service.

Then, because there were not enough of those redeeming elements in old Rome, came the barbaric ages with women riding on the waves of invasion like flames, some of them flames of evil, some of them flames of the spirit, but in their unprecedented preparation of themselves for becoming living free agents, getting ready for what is perhaps the greatest single change that came into the life of us women of the West, the gift of the Middle Ages,—the idea that man might love woman not only for her body but for her soul. Mary the Virgin meant that to our world. She was remote and yet infinitely near and dear. She was lovely and untouchable, yet always tender to poor humans. She was the soul of motherhood. Romance, chivalry, the little nuns

and the great abbesses, the ladies of castles and courts, crowd this marvelous time. Woman was a soul.

Later came the Renaissance and gathered great men about the courts of intellectual princesses, and on its heels the brilliant social power touched with politics of the salons.

Today seems to gather all the threads. Educational and economic and finally political battles have been fought and won. The processes have not been simple or constant. There have been back-waters and cross-currents. Yet there does seem to be a certain continuity and inevitableness. Perhaps one may call it an evolution. Evolution sometimes makes leaps when it has been long getting ready for them, but it does not jump away from all it has been gathering and forget its past.

The mere story of a progress is not by any means all. Truly we deprive ourselves of a vast deal of gratification when we distort that word "history"; when, as we have a way of doing, we do those delectable people of the past up into bunches like asparagus and label them "Third Century B.C." or "Fifteenth Century A.D."; tag them with dates and think of them in the abstract, lumpy abstract, and mostly in terms of wars and conquests.

Women have suffered particularly from the "done up in bunches" point of view. If there is a chapter on women in a volume of history, in nine cases out of ten it will deal with marriage laws. We have been thought of only as mothers of the race and not as individuals. Of course we are, in reality, both mothers of the race—thank God—and individuals. We are not merely types walking about in clothes.

So-called "history," then, is not all of it. As one moves one's steps into the past, feeling the way a bit because of the dimmer light, one realizes that there is a long succession of the same kind of friends one has today, men and women struggling, succeeding, failing, suffering, exultant, hating

and loving, full of the verve of life. They are wonderful people with whom to have a personal acquaintance. The mere fact that they happen to be dead does not make any great difference so far as our friendliness and sympathy and interest are concerned. There are many and many who stood beside us yesterday in flesh and blood who have today dropped from our ranks into some bigger and less familiar cosmos. They do not seem remote. One does not cherish them less because they have already become a part of history.

So the women who are friends stretch back farther and farther into the past, growing a little dim with age, perhaps, but not changed in any essential. How they lived is a story. History is only a long list of their stories with the perennial appeal that stories have. Every one's life is ourselves, as it were, placed in a far off land or remote time or strange surroundings. Where shall we draw the line of easy-going understanding. There does not seem to be a limit.

Of course a single volume can compass no more than a touch-and-go introduction. Every one of the women who comes on these pages is worthy of a book to herself, biography, drama, novel. If any of them proves more alluring than another, the mere acquaintance may ripen into a more permanent friendship at will. One steps into the huge reception room of other days.

Chapter II

MOTHERS IN ISRAEL

UNFORTUNATELY we know nothing about "who was who" in Neolithic Society, or even in Cro-Magnon times, and for any sense of comradeship it is necessary to have a closer intimacy than comes merely from being informed that people were dolichocephalic and had deep-set eyes.

But if we begin with Eve it is different. Eve is the real originator of things as they are. Two very different beings she was—and is. First she is mother, and as such we know her very well. Second she is originator of all the ferment of life, and as such, even if indirectly, we know her very well. One may call her a symbol, or a myth, or any other bad name, all one likes. She remains one of the realest of persons.

Michelangelo has flung her on the ceiling of the Sistine, with face dazed, awed, alluring, in spite of the irregularity of features; and with abundant body outstretched. She is reaching up for the apple of knowledge, while Adam puts forth all his strength to bend the bough of the tree down to her that she may sin! One would like to know that woman. Probably most of us, her sons and daughters, find her when we look inside ourselves in our quiet moments. This is "she who causes to bud." But if this is she as she was born to womanhood, she is no care-free happy creature such as belongs in Eden. Rather is she burdened from the beginning with a vision of her own responsibility for what is to become of the fruit of her body. Already from the moment when she came into being, she wants to know the meaning

of good and evil. A prescience of them lies in her eyes. Such an Eve as this must have been easy prey for the serpent long before Adam tried to lay all the blame on her for his own weakness, and she, in turn, laid the reproach at the door of the serpent and all three of them received the reward of sin.

This is the world of Eve.

"I will tell you," said a woman of eighty-six, "I will tell you what every human being wants more than anything else. It is *excitement*."

There is, of course, a series of excitements, beginning with the red ball of babyhood and ending with sidelights on the meaning of all life here and hereafter, which happens to be the form of thrill that appeals to this particular wise old lady.

After all, none of us are much interested in that brief and unruffled life in an earthly paradise where the inhabitants knew nothing but placidity. Life of reality and labor and vicissitudes began when we faced storm and pestilence and war and passion—the world to which Eve, our mother, introduced us. The drama of living, like the drama of story, fixes its hold upon us not through the unruffled, but through the unexpected and the tumultuous. Above all other names that are named, Eve's signifies our humanhood with its upward hope and its downward pull, both quickened in her from the very beginning.

So Eve has been dreamed over by artists and poets, sometimes as the eternal feminine in its loveliness, sometimes as the embodiment of motherhood, sometimes as the incarnation of all that lies in our subconsciousness. Theologians have shaken their fists at all the rest of us women over her shoulder, and other theologians have more benevolently remembered that her seed should crush the serpent's head.

"Woman has the poison of an asp and the malice of a dragon," said Gregory the Great; and St. Jerome, "Eve

was the principle of death. Mary is the source of life." But Mary was, after all, instinct in Eve. It would be hard to classify the accomplishments of this illustrious lady—creation, marriage, children, moving and keeping house under difficulties. Yet, if one may be permitted a bit of slang, she "certainly started something." And each of us has a vision of her, out of the innumerable number of which a composite photograph might be made. Hers is life as it is lived. In popular imagination Adam is almost a non-entity beside her.

Eve, the mother, and Helen, the allurement, are the two outstanding women figures that the misty ancient world gave us before history got fairly started. The first out of the people to which everything must be sacrificed to worship and therefore to race integrity; the second from the land that worshiped beauty in its ordered perfection—cosmos.

Every once in a while in the story of the Hebrew men, a woman is suddenly plucked up and shown above the heads of the crowd because she was a definite link, so important that she could not be ignored, and since the writers of the Old Testament had that supreme literary gift of making people and happenings visible in a few words, we have the pleasure of distinct pictures and impressions of personality illuminating those far-off ladies of remote lands. Mothers of men, mothers of Hebrew men, were they; or, perhaps, in their day, players, for or against, in the game of politics which meant a people apart from all others.

To us, among the first of our women friends comes Sarah, lovely with the youth of her people. She is jostled about on camel backs through deserts and through fruitful lands. She lives always in a tent. She has the problems of bread-making and weaving and garment-making while she wanders, with ever-growing flocks and herds as her husband piles up the wealth of the nomad, for Abraham was rich in cattle and in silver and in gold. And she grows old and

older, having failed in the only real purpose of her life, the bearing of a son. Like a real woman, she has a magnificent spurt of generosity that makes her willing that her husband should have a child, even though that child be not hers; and again like a real woman, her personal jealousy outweighs her race passion, and she hates the boy and his mother who will perpetuate the family of Abraham. An ugly-hearted fierce old woman she, in the moment when she so tortured Hagar and the young lad that the desert seemed to them more to be preferred than the security of Abraham's tent; and not too pleasant a picture of an old woman when she hid behind a tent door to listen to what men were saying outside and to laugh, with an old woman's cacophony, at the very idea that she, on in her old age, could be the mother of a boy. But strange things happened to Sarah. She saw the pillar of salt into which her disobedient kinswoman had been changed. Better not to laugh at the Power that could do such things. And an extraordinary woman was she herself who could tempt King Abimelech to take her away from the faithful and long-enduring husband when she was so far along in years. Ninon de l'Enclos, with whom three generations were long afterward to fall in love, had apparently no such secret of youth-preservation as old Sarah in her tent. Then came the child. "And Sarah said, 'God hath made me laugh so that all that hear will laugh with me,' " for Abraham the father was a hundred years old. But poor Hagar did not laugh, for Sarah, who was evidently a tyrant in her own household, said, "Cast out the bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac." And out they went.

Sarah, with her loveliness and her fading charms, her whims and jealousies and her old-age triumph all under blazing sun and the half shadow of a roving tent life, is an extraordinarily vivid race-mother. No less so the gentler,

more beautiful Rebekah, whom Isaac's servant sought. "Behold Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down unto the well and drew water; and I said to her, Let me drink, I pray thee. And she made haste and let down her pitcher and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also." Jewels of gold and silver and precious raiment were brought out for the damsel, and there was weeping and exchange of genealogies and much feasting before Rebekah drove away on her camels, "And Isaac took her into his mother Sarah's tent, and she became his wife and he loved her."

No wonder generation after generation, up to the hundreds in number, has made a fond tradition of Rachel and Leah and all the panoply of caravans and the glamor of life, half pastoral, half splendid, in the days when it took only a gold ring or a goodly dish to constitute splendor.

But there were other more complicated women to come. When they plied their charms for the benefit of the race, they were blessed. When they performed similar acts against the race, they were cursed. To all ancient peoples The Race, The Tribe, was everything, the man only a scrap of the whole. Our common talk about the right to live our own lives, about individuality, would have been empty and unmeaning words to them. Only out of such a state of mind could nations take form. But if this was true of other peoples, it was doubly true of the Hebrew, who held himself apart from others, and if this was doubly true of the Hebrew man, it was trebly and quadruply true of the woman. The good women who are remembered in the Old Testament are given that honor because they were links in racial greatness.

Rahab, the harlot, who betrayed her city of Jericho, lied to save the Israelitish spies, twisted a scarlet thread in her window in order to mark her house so that when all her fellow townsmen (to whom, in all decency most of us

would think, she would have owed some tenderness) were put to the sword, she and her household should be saved, "She dwelleth in Israel even unto this day, because she hid the messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho." Nay—this Rahab achieves the distinction of being one of the three ancestresses of David and of Joseph to be listed in the very first chapter of the New Testament. But Delilah, who used those same illicit charms to beguile Philistia's enemy, the giant Israelite Samson, is the very synonym for the everlasting evil lure of women. Jezebel, that splendid princess of Tyre, who married a young prince of Israel, made sure that the worship of her god, Baal, should take precedence over the adoration of her husband's God, Jehovah, lived and built with lavish splendor, and spurred her husband to iniquity. "There was none like unto Ahab which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And he did very abominably." The end of her is a whole drama in a few sentences, for when her son was reigning in the place of her dead husband, there came a truer Israelite. "And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it, and she painted her face and tired her head and looked out of a window. And as Jehu entered in at the gate, he lifted up his face to the window, and said, who is on my side? Who? And there looked out to him two or three eunuchs. And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall and on the horses, and he trod her underfoot. And when he was come in he did eat and drink, and said, Go see now this cursed woman, and bury her, for she was a king's daughter. And they went to bury her but they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands." "This is Jezebel."

Over against Jezebel and Delilah, Jael flashes into sight with Deborah her prophetess beside her on the same side as

Rahab. She stood at her tent door and spoke soft words to a fleeing fainting enemy-king, and invited him into her shelter only to drive a nail into his temple as he slept the sleep of exhaustion. "Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite, be; blessed shall she be above women in the tent." And no less fierce than this slayer whose hand did not falter was the intrepid prophetess, who ruled and fought beside her. Israel was wandering after strange gods, until, "that I, Deborah, arose, that I arose, a mother in Israel." "Was there a shield or a spear seen among forty thousand in Israel?" Away from their sheep folds, down from their hills, into ships and into trenches poured the tribes at Deborah's call, and the very stars and rivers fought for her and for her God, when she went out from under the palm tree where she dwelt. "Awake, awake, Deborah; awake, utter a song; arise Barak and lead thy captivity captive."

Furious and bloody times these, and crowded with savage and furious women to match them, women whose names are interwoven with our thought and imagery of today. Fortunately there are others more lovable and no less vivid.

But the daughters of Zelophehad, who were they? For some reason this little group, who may be called the first women who invoked law and justice on behalf of their sex, the first feminists, in fact, have failed to catch popular imagination. Perhaps just because they did not scream, nor did they try the old game of sex charm, but stood on the basis of right, it has been convenient to ignore them for centuries that had no inclination to mix up questions of women with questions of justice. One likes to think of five slender, dark-eyed, unexpected Hebrew girls who dared to approach the presence of Moses, the Lawgiver, with a plea that must have startled that masculine-minded Hebrew, and yet a demand that appealed to the eminent

standard of ethics that distinguishes the Jewish race. One suspects that these girls were possessed of both beauty and youth, which eternally make it easier for a plea for justice to make itself heard. But here come the slim maidens, daughters of Zelophehad, saying: "Our father . . . died in his sin, and had no sons. Why should the name of our father be done away from among his family, because he hath no son? *Give unto us therefore a possession among the brethren of our father.*" No wonder a worried Moses retired to consult the Lord. And the Lord spoke fairly. "*The daughters of Zelophehad speak right.*" Of course the Lord was on their side! Pity there have not been more Moses-like intimates of the Lord to do some more direct appealing on behalf of women in years to come! But the matter was not ended here, for the elders of the family of Gilead in the tribe of Joseph got together and grew agitated. Just this and that in land had been apportioned to each tribe. If these girls, who inherited in their own right, went off to marry in another tribe and took their property rights with them what confusion of boundaries and allotments would take place. Moses had to make an additional and supplementary judgment. This it was: "Let them marry to whom they think best; only to the family of the tribe of their father shall they marry." "Even as the Lord commanded Moses, so did the daughters of Zelophehad"; for they became the wives of their cousins, "and their inheritance remained in the tribe of the family of their father."

The drama of the far-off first woman's rights movement ends, as all well-constructed plays should, with five weddings and everybody happy. It is worth while to remember the very names of these five young things who established a new precedent in law—at least in Hebrew law—the right of daughters to inherit. They were Mahlah, Noah (!), Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah. The Book of Numbers does

not give the names of the bridegrooms, only of the brides. Credit to whom credit is due.

Of course the two most appealing women in the crowded pages of ancient Israel are those to whom each in turn, an entire book is given, one a humble little suppliant from a strange tribe, and one a princess, not for her own sake, but for the sake of her fathers' God.

Ruth is set like a jewel in a story all her own. She comes like healing silence after the women of intrigue and war. Four little chapters to tell one of the sweetest women stories in the long line. Naomi, far away among strangers in the land of Moab, was widowed of her husband and bereft of her two sons. No one was left her except the two alien wives those sons had married. She must up and away to her own people. "I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again, empty." Orpah, one daughter-in-law, stayed behind, but Ruth would go with Naomi whom she loved. It is curious that those eternally famous words that have been quoted for three thousand years are seldom remembered to be the expression of love from one woman to another, the complete answer, if one were needed, to the ribald theory that unswerving unselfish love does not exist between women. "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest will I die and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me and more also if aught but death part thee and me." So Ruth passes before us in many pictures, like a procession of herself, gathering a few poor bits from the fields where reapers had left them; Ruth recognized and protected by the nearest relative of her dead husband; Ruth raised to honor as the wife of the rich Boaz; Ruth laying her new baby in the arms of Naomi, so that the woman said, "He shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life and a nourisher of

thine old age; for thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him."

It is, of course, the old always-alluring Cinderella theme, but this time touched with a delicacy and a tenderness and a religious fervor that places it apart. In the Old Testament, however, it is not the love story chiefly that gives Ruth her place, much as the world has treasured that element. To the Israelite, the theme is the mother text. Ruth, by faith in the race and the God to whom she was not born, earned the privilege of being the great grandmother of David the King, the third of those women mentioned in the first chapter of Matthew—side by side with Rahab the harlot!

"The maid was fair and beautiful" when her uncle Mordecai took the orphaned Esther under his protection in the land of Media and Persia where her people were enslaved and hated. A great to-do and a vast amount of gossip must have gone on in every household when the king held an orgy of a hundred and eighty days to display the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honor of his excellent majesty (though "the drinking was according to law: none did compel!"). But the ending was dramatic and exciting, for the king's heart was merry with wine when he sent for his queen Vashti to exhibit her, the loveliest of his treasures, to the crowd that had been feasting so long. And Vashti refused to obey or to let her beauty be made a cheap exhibit. Something of a heroine, Vashti! But her own time trembled at the precedent. If a wife dared to disobey her husband, even though obedience meant personal degradation, what became of all marital authority? All women would "despise their husbands in their eyes." "Thus there shall arise too much contempt and wrath." Away with her!

Queen Vashti's disgrace was every maiden's opportunity. Their little lovely bodies were laid before the throne. But

the beauty of Esther pleased the king most of all, and she gave it unquestioningly to put her people high in honor, though she kept the secret of her race while political and personal animosities gathered around that court of intrigues, until the time came for a swift and crushing blow at the enemies of her race. Then all the gentleness and comeliness of the new queen wrested from her lord freedom to the Jews to give rein to stored-up revenge. Uncle Mordecai led the slaughter up and down the provinces and even into the walls of the palace itself. So was Queen Esther great, and her triumph celebrated forever by the feast of Purim. My people and the mother of my people!

All through the Old Testament, there is a certain tenderness and respect for women that wins our hearts, whether it be for the ancient ancestresses, Sarah and Rachel; for Hannah, the praying mother; for the wise Abigail who knew when to keep a secret from her husband for his own sake; for Bathsheba, so lovely that she led King David into unforgivable sin and became the mother of the wisest Solomon.

There is the unnamed little daughter of Jephtha, who came forth with timbrels and with dances, only to learn that she must die without bearing a son, and whose brave facing of her fate made the daughters of Israel celebrate her four days in each year. And there is that other unnamed woman who threw a millstone down from the tower and broke the skull of Abimelech, so that he "called hastily unto the young man his armorbearer, and said unto him, Draw thy sword and kill me, that men say not of me, A woman slew him."

A long procession it is. The significance of them is that they have colored not only our painting and our drama and our poems, but our every-day thinking. The Hebrew acknowledged a ruling power higher than force; and, because they could share in spiritual energy, the power of women,

felt and recognized in that tiny country, isolated on the east shore of the Mediterranean, was to mean readjustment of values to millions of women among peoples who knew not Israel, when Christianity captured far-off races who had never thought of women on the spiritual basis.

There is one perfect and complete picture of womanhood left us, quite unique in ancient lore—a woman of executive power—who buys and sells and works and guards.

"The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar. She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.

Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates."

Chapter III

THE SISTERHOOD OF ASPASIA

THERE are those who speak the name of the first of women poets with the terrible fascination that is exercised by a career of spectacular lawless passion. They look between their fingers. They use her as an excuse for playing up everything that is illicit and suggestive in drama and poem. Others there are (those that do not jump at a bait without looking), who utter the name of Sappho with a kind of awe for all that is exquisite and beautiful. She has, however, this vantage-ground. She never knew that she was to be stigmatized as a symbol of the untamed woman. She had the satisfaction of living, so far as we know, a most delightful life where she was glorified and loved for doing the thing she most enjoyed. Her martyrdom was altogether post-mortem.

We make her acquaintance, then, living in a small self-absorbed community on the loveliest of islands, marble-cliffed, wooded with cypress and beech, draped with myrtle and violets, with jessamine and roses. Every one knew every one else and all the little happenings of life. Existence was primitive and had not had time to grow case-hardened. To Sappho it was so beautiful that she bubbled over with it, the sky and sea and the bodies of dancing or working men and women. Particularly did she love her young girls, who gathered as to a magnet to spin and weave or to march in religious procession to the temples of the easygoing gods, or to wail with veiled heads at the bier of a lost neighbor. She set aflame her maidens with the same

ecstasy in the soft-aired out-of-doors where life was lived, to sing of the springs or the mountains and the opal Mediterranean, to surround every simple act with processional and pageantry and song. The long lovely garments of Greece fell into folds of beauty. Lesbos adored its Sappho. It put her face on its coins. The fame of her spread to other islands and to the mainland, and Aeolian, Ionian, Dorian and Achaean, every one who counted himself a Hellene, began to call her "the poetess" as he called Homer "the poet." Her genius gave them songs for marriage cortége and for rhythmic dancing procession as well as for the girls who sang around their looms. The great lawgiver, Solon, when he first heard one of her poems, cried out that he was not willing to die till he had committed it to memory, and some hundreds of years later the even greater Plato was to name her "the tenth muse."

As for the morals of the lady, we have but two contemporary witnesses—one her own reproach addressed to her brother for having any intimacy with a dissolute woman; and the other, the words of a masculine poet, Alcaeus, who speaks of her as "violet-crowned, *chaste*, sweetly-smiling Sappho."

Then came the irony of fate. Perhaps two hundred years passed. Athens was setting the literary standards for all time, and to the Athenian it was impossible to believe that a free woman could be a good woman. He shut his wife up in back rooms while he played with dubious but charming and witty women. So his comic poets found fruitful ground in Sappho. They "gave her two lovers who were born after she died and one who was dead before she was born." Why be tied down by mere fact? They invented a passion for an unreciprocating youth and a plunge to death over the Leucadian cliff into the sea, singing as she fell. "Sapphic" became a synonym for uncontrolled womanhood. Then the other freak of fate. In the whirligig of history all of the

poems she wrote save one have disappeared. The adorers of Sappho are to be found mostly among grubby book-wormy scholars who toil through volumes and volumes of dull manuscripts to dig out here and there a single sentence or even a phrase quoted by some scholiast. Yet even among these, occasionally one waxes poetic as if by reflection. Or a really great critic, such as Symonds, finds himself ablaze with love for her whose every word has still a "kind of perfume" like old lavender.

One hopes that she had a thoroughly good time while she lived, and that, in the perpetual immortality where she now lodges, there is no consciousness of the slime of earth. She is like the gracious leader of the dance that circles an old Greek vase. But it is a strange fate to carry the most illustrious name in all the long line of women authors, and that with hardly a screed left to support it; to bear a reputation eternally branded with dishonor, though never a trace of a foundation for such stain remains. Poor little Sappho, the first of women to suffer for being a real person, the greatest of poetesses, the most unknown.

Other poetesses sprang up in Greece, but none to equal this first. Errinna, a friend of Sappho, who according to tradition, was chained by her mother to her spinning wheel, but who, nevertheless, managed to write a famous verse to "The Distaff" before she died at nineteen; Corinna in Thebes, who got the prize above her contemporary Pindar and was sculptured binding her fillet of victory around her brows. One wonders whether the winning of literary prizes in ancient Greece had any greater significance than it has in twentieth century America.

Sappho, dim, hedged with tradition and controversy, is a link between history and legend—the marvelous legend-world of Hellas. "The truest history is not that which has happened," said an illustrious and wise Frenchman. Among our Greek intimates stand not only the Sappho who really

lived, but also the equally true heroines that may or may not have had existence but who are just as vivid a part of us.

A clever German once said that, to the Greek, woman was an object of use or an object of pleasure, but that he no more thought of loving her for these reasons than one would love a brandy bottle or a railroad train. The great love stories of old Greece concerned themselves with the passionate friendship of men, Achilles for Patroclus, which is the inspiration of the Iliad; the love of Orestes and Pylades; Hercules and Hylas. If a woman is introduced, her love must be, as it were, sexless, unless it be the token of madness, as in *The Bacchae*. It was love for father or country or duty. Sex love was not a thing a noble mind cared to dwell on.

The Greek would have been as amazed at our interpretation of his old legends in terms of our romantic ideas as we are dumfounded by his lack of that same romance. Antigone, the most noble and tragic of heroines, is a fair example. Her father thrown from kingship into beggary, blind and helpless, is the object of her first self-sacrifice. Then her brother, denied the rights of burial without which he could not be at peace in the world of the dead, cries to her from the bloodstained sand. She must bury him and appease the gods, even though it means her own death by starvation, walled into a living tomb. The plea of the man she was to marry is brushed aside. There are plenty of husbands to be got, but with father and mother dead, she can never have another brother. Her path leads straight to self immolation. She is a great woman.

Modern poet and modern artist have drawn lovely pictures of Alcestis, who chose to deliver herself into the hands of death to save the life of her husband, but any one of us today is puzzled by the play of Euripides, on which, with many contortions of the story, later romances are founded.

Alcestis bewails her youth, her children, her parents, but has not much thought for the lord of her body for whom she dies. He was the head of the state and the head of the family. He had a right to demand sacrifice from a noble wife. And she is a noble wife. The fact that Admetus is hospitable to strangers entitles him to be rewarded by receiving her back as a valuable piece of property, for hospitality is a primary virtue. When Homer wants to find out how worthy a man is, the two questions are: Is he reverent to the gods, and hospitable to strangers? If he is these two, then he is a noble and pious person.

Play and poem and story are full of the nobility of women who prove themselves capable of greatness all the way from the tearing of self of the Antigone and Electra kind, through Penelope, the perfect home-maker, whose privilege it was to hold together property and princedom while her husband philandered for ten years with another (and no blame to him), and whose reward at the end is to be reminded that there are rear rooms where women belong. Her heart leaps up at this evidence that her son, for whom she wrought, has achieved manhood at last.

There are fighting brawny women, Amazons. There is wisdom incarnate in Athene, for whom the great city received its name; there is prosperity and mystery in Demeter; there is beauty and passion in Aphrodite. All these are in the realm of legend.

Another tale of the workings of the gods shows what lies behind the Greek scorn of women. They were not really part of the race.

When great Agamemnon came home a victor from ten years' siege of Troy, he was met by his guilty wife Clytemnestra and slain. The small son, a child, was nursed by his sister for years until he should come to man's estate and revenge his father's death by killing his mother. Then came the hideous pursuit of Orestes from country to coun-

try by the Furies, thrusting his mother's corpse forever in his face. At last he makes a stand and demands fair trial. His plea is that his mother was no relation to him. She was a woman who had been taken into his family. He was bound by all that was holy to avenge his father. In the very courts of Goddess Athena, the trial is held, and the god Apollo himself gives judgment. Orestes is right. "*The mother is not parent to the child.*" Only the father is parent. The mother is, as it were, the soil, where the seed grows for a time until it is ready for light and air.

"Woman is an immortal necessary evil," says one poet, "A man has two pleasant days with his wife, the first when he marries her, the second when he buries her," Hipponax adds.

Barring only Eve, the most celebrated name of names among women is Helen's. She is the jewel of the world, imperishable, flawless, and almost as impersonal as a diamond, a piece of property that any man might covet. One man secures her, another steals her, the first gets her back, and establishes her again in the setting of his court and home, with never a word of blame for those years away with Paris in Troy. Why should one reproach a jewel for being stolen? There is something deliciously masculine in the perpetuation of this rapture in a beauty that cannot be injured, that walks and talks and moves at the behest of its owner, that may even, years after it has ceased to be visible to the world, be revived by the spells of the necromancer and given to a Faust, just as one might take a gem from a museum and bestow it on a new owner. Behold the perfect woman, the masculine ideal for an æon.

All the women of the Homeric poems are quite exquisite. They submit with perfect dignity to their fate,—princess today, slave tomorrow—in fact, always a slave though sometimes with the name of nobility. Their self-control reminds one in some ways of the red Indian's. They mingle

with their men much more freely than they were to be allowed to do in later times (except in Sparta) and all conversation between men and women, between husband and wife, is marked with exceedingly good manners, no matter how quarrelsome men are with each other. It is not until one arrives on Mt. Olympus among the celestials that one finds domestic wrangling.

All these stories are in the realm of art and drama. What of the real women? To the Greek world and also to the Roman that succeeded it, the family was not so much a unit of blood as a unit of worship. The adopted son, who carrid on the ceremonials at the altar of his law-father was more closely related to that father than was his own daughter's son, because the latter had been born into another family to another worship. The altar in the home and the family tomb outside the walls were the two centers of life interest where libations were poured and prayers went up. From her wedding day, the girl shared in the religion of her husband and was an exile from the gods of her fathers. Marriage was the adoption of a new religion. Its ceremonials consisted in three things; first, separation from her family; second, the passage to a new home, accompanied by struggle and the lifting over the door sill (in memory of the good old times when men stole wives and carried them away, willy nilly); third, the initiation into a new worship and the eating of bread or cake as a symbol of it. (We still, we know not why, have bride cakes.) In this scheme of things, then, neither blood relationship nor worship went through women. Men lived their lives out in the open sunshine, in temples or market places or gymnasiums, and with each other. Slaves did the grubby work. Back in some hidden rooms were the wives busy or idle, who had come into wifehood while they were still mere children of twelve or thirteen, ignorant. How could they be stimulating companions to the husbands who owned the

world of freedom and thought? Child-bearing and housework were their end and all. What other contribution could they make to men whose thoughts were running to politics and philosophy? What domestic felicity could one expect? Women were abused, and that right roundly, for the results induced, in fact forced on them, by this state of things. Women were dirty and sensual, were greedy eaters, were liars—at least the respectable women by whom men had legitimate children.

Simonides of Amorgus classifies us women, and discovers that there are ten kinds of us, all bad but one, all derived from animals. "One is the bristly hog, in whose house every thing tumbles about in disorder, bespattered with mud, and rolls upon the ground; she, dirty, with unwashed clothes, sits and grows fat. Another is like a fox; another like a dog; one is like mud, ignorant of everything, both good and bad. Her only accomplishment is eating. Cold though the winter be, she is too stupid to draw near the fire. The woman like the sea has two minds. When she laughs and is glad the stranger seeing her at home will give her praise; there is not a better woman than this on earth, no, nor a fairer; another day she is unbearable, not to be looked at or approached, but she is right mad. To friend or foe alike she is implacable and odious. Thus as the sea often is calm and innocent, a great delight to sailors in the summer time, and oftentimes again is frantic, tearing along with savage billows, so is this woman in her temper. The woman like a mare is delicate and long-haired, unfit for drudgery and toil. She would not touch the mill or sieve, or clean the house out. She bathes twice or thrice a day and smears herself with myrrh. She wears her hair combed out long and wavy, decked with flowers. It follows that this woman is a rare sight to guests, but to her husband she is a curse, unless he is a tyrant who prides himself on expensive luxuries. Only one sort is good—that born from the bee:

'Dear to her spouse from youth to age she grows;
Fills with fair girls and sturdy boys his house;
Among all women womanliest seems,
And heavenly grace about her mild brow gleams.
A gentle wife, a noble spouse she walks,
And never with the gossip mongers talks.
Such women sometimes Zeus to mortals gives,
The glory and the solace of their lives.' "

In all the history of the great Athens, there is hardly a woman known even by name, much less a woman of distinction. To be sure we learn of Xanthippe, the wife of Socrates, famous for her ill favor, of whom her philosophic husband remarks that he chose her for spiritual discipline, since, if he could live with her, he could get along with any human being.

But out of the muck comes one darling of our hearts, fair and lovable and serene, clear thinking and original and vastly significant to all of us who have followed her. Of course, she was not an Athenian. The harem-like back rooms of Athens could not breed such as she. Nevertheless, she came like all the rest of the world, to Athens—Athens of the lavender air and the splendid genius, an adventuress to be sure, but an adventuress who was not a parasite but one who could give as much or more than she demanded in return. It was one of the great happy chances of the world that the lovely Aspasia met the greatest man of the greatest age of Greece and that they loved each other in a union, illicit so far as the laws of Athens were concerned, but sanctified by years of faithfulness. Here under Aspasia's hand grew the most illustrious salon of all the ages. There has never been a parallel to that time of Pericles, the lover of Aspasia, who gave name to his "age," never so brief a space when so many men whom we have agreed to call immortal were gathered in one little city.

Probably it was because there could be no legal marriage of an Athenian man except with an Athenian-born woman, and because, therefore, the household of Pericles was not inside ordinary rules, that Aspasia, with his backing, dared to set up a society in which she mingled with men guests. Home was built around two secluded little courts, to the outer of which the world was admitted. Back further were kitchens and work rooms and women. No room could have been better built for delightful intimacy and remoteness from distractions than the first "aule," for the very apartment was a little set garden with a fountain and an altar and flowers, all circled by a shadowed cloister-like passage against the ardent Grecian sun. Hither came the men whose names are traditions, Sophocles and Euripides the playwrights, Zeuxis and Phidias the artists, Socrates and Zeno and Anaxagoras and Protagoras the philosophers. It was an age of mental adventure, and everything was discussed, beauty and morals and human destiny and government, and the flashing Aspasia gave color to it all. There must have been times when they all kept silent and listened to her, for very soon they began to quote her outside, and soon some of them ventured to bring their wives—unheard-of liberty!—to hear what this woman had to say about women and the fine art of living together, husbands and wives. No wonder that the outside world of conventional commonplace began to gossip and rumble. This strange woman from Miletus was immoral and impious. It was whispered that they talked about one God instead of many at her house. Dreadful! They talked about ideal society built on new foundations. If Athens had had a word for Bolshevik, it would have called Aspasia that. There came a day when Pericles, the great Pericles, the god-like Pericles, who had crowned Athens with the Parthenon and made her the jewel of history, had to go down on his knees and beg with tears for her life from an old-fashioned court. But he

won out. "And did you know," the cacklers whispered, "that *she wrote* Pericles' orations for him? And she stirred up Socrates to his newfangled ideas about God and immortality?"

A word about Socrates. He was truly a most pestiferous fellow-citizen, for he went about asking every one the most uncomfortable questions and then convicted them in their own eyes of inconsistency or futility. No wonder people hated him. But certain young men, and those the most brilliant and original, led by Plato, loved and followed him and kept a record of all these conversations for the astonishment of future ages. Socrates was much impressed by Aspasia. She talked about great mothers for great men. There was something in that. Perhaps men had been stupid about a matter of great importance. They might pay greater attention to the possibilities that lay in the women who were to bear their children. So, in talking with a friend,

"Is there any one whom you oftener trust with important matters than your wife?" he asked.

"No one."

"Is there any one with whom you converse less?"

"Few, if any."

"You married her when quite a young girl, or at any rate when she could have seen and heard little."

"Quite so."

"Well, then, it would seem much more wonderful if she *did* know how to speak and act than if she failed therein. There is nothing like looking into it, and more, I will introduce you to Aspasia, who will know how to show you all about such things better than I. But, in my opinion, a wife who manages her share in the household matters well has as much influence as her husband on their prosperity."

Here was revolutionary doctrine for you, and a picture

of how dull home life was for both men and women who did not talk together.

Hidden away in Xenophon's *Economics* is a delightful bit of discussion that concerns Socrates and Aspasia, and the home as it was and the home as it might be. It stands to reason that nothing called Xenophon's *Economics* can attain wide popularity or rank among the best sellers in this modern world. Nevertheless, everything that this human gad-fly, Socrates, ever said has left its impress on the world.

Socrates, then, had heard of a certain young citizen named Isomachus, who was giving all his time to public affairs. They met on the street one day, and the philosopher saw his opportunity, as if he said, "Sit down here on the curbstone"—only it was really on the portico of Jupiter Eleutherius—"and tell me how you manage." Isomachus explained that he had all this liberty for public affairs because his wife was able to administer his home. "Strange," said Socrates. "Did she know how to conduct a household when you married her?" "How could she?" Isomachus came back. "When she was fifteen at the time of our marriage and had been strictly brought up that she might see as little, hear as little and ask as few questions as possible." (A sidelight this, on the education of Athenian girls for the great business of matrimony.) Isomachus went on to explain that when he had got his new wife to the point where she was not afraid of him, he told her that he and she were engaged in a joint business, the founding of a family, and that it was her job as well as his; that the gods had given both sexes memory and mental powers and the possibility of virtue; that it seemed the part of men to do the outdoor things and of women to conduct the inside affairs; that he should bring in, and she should administer; otherwise his job is like trying to fill a bucket that is full of holes. If she is wise and faithful, she is like a queen bee and she

will grow in dominion over her husband. "For what is good and honorable gains in increase of respect, not from beauty of person but from merits directed to the benefit of human life." A house may have the beauty of a chorus or an army, whose whole effectiveness depends on ordered coöperation. "I say that even kitchen pots have a graceful appearance when they are placed in regular order, for the several sorts of vessels seem like so many choral bands." So the two went about and decided on exactly where every article could best be placed and how order should be maintained.

"By Juno, Isomachus, you show us that your wife is possessed of a manly understanding. It is a far greater pleasure to hear of the merits of a living woman than if Zeuxis were to exhibit to me the most beautiful representation of a woman in a painting." Socrates would hear more.

This pattern husband, of the newest model of the fourth century before Christ (who really should have worn horn spectacles and been a college professor, so precise he appears on the dusty old pages of the dead language), proceeded to tell how he asked his wife what she would think of him if he showed her counterfeit money and jewelry of painted wood, as his treasure. She would cease to trust him. Then what must he think of her when she came to him with white lead and brilliant paint on her face? "If those who live together in intimacy attempt to deceive each other, they must certainly be found out." What was her answer to this? "She never appeared in paint again, but asked how she might make herself really good-looking and not merely appear so." Isomachus, as if he had been editing a beauty page, advised *exercise*, *diet*, and helping in domestic work.

It is worth while to contrast this supposedly radical Greek setting forth of a possibly careful woman, with the Hebrew picture, where freedom of girt loins and of community activities is taken for granted. A wide gulf here—

and Judæa has played more deeply on our subconsciousness than even Hellas.

Sparta and Aspasia set Athens discussing the woman question. The most diverting of comic poets wrote plays about it. Aristophanes is almost as much the object of fate's irony as Sappho, for though many of his plays remain to us, they might, in general, as well be dead. He was really funny. He was the Gilbert of Athens, lyrical, effervescent, pungent, often to the point of being waspish. Of course, all ancient drama has things in it that no lady should see or hear, but which were all right for the perfect gentleman (—that is, the perfect lady and gentleman of the model of B.C.). But imagine Gilbert translated by a heavy professor, with footnotes on every page explaining all jokes at length, with cross references and genealogies of public characters referred to—more note than there is original comedy to each page—and you will have the fate of Aristophanes.

One of his plays shows women disguising themselves as men and creeping into the popular assembly to vote a communistic government after the suggestions of Plato. This government by women was the only form that volatile Athens had not tried. Everything else had been experimented with and failed. They could not do worse. Why not try this? Women would at least give a gentle rule; there would be no poverty in the town; slander would cease —which shows that the old Greek was kinder to women than the moderns who have imputed to her all gossip and its evil train. "Perhaps," thinks Aristophanes, "under such a rule, men might be happy."

But the *Lysistrata* is more significant. Here he speaks a bit for himself through the mouths of women. Lysistrata of Athens resolves to put a stop to war in Greece, the devastating war that was, in truth, to weaken both Sparta and Athens so that they would become the prey of advancing

Rome. So Lysistrata calls women from every little city and province. They will know how to deal with the foolish men who keep on waging war. Every woman hates war. "But what," asks one of the delegates, "do we know? The only things we are wise about are little saffron colored robes, unguents and sandals and alkanet root and transparent vests." "Nay, these are the very things that will save us," cries Lysistrata. "They are the settings of our everlasting lure for men. Use them to tempt. Then refuse to grant love or pleasure. Boycott all our men until they yield and make peace."

Lampeto comes from Sparta. The other women are amazed at her. "What a fresh color you have! How vigorous your body is! You could throttle an ox!" "Surely," says Lampeto. "I leap and exercise every day."

The humbled men at last sue for terms, and Lysistrata reminds them of how they of Greece worship the same gods, pour the same libations, and how, once, they who are now cutting each other's throats, fought at Marathon and Salamis in a common cause against the Persian. In the comic poet, the women are victorious, and Greece receives peace with pæans of joy. But not in history, though history repeats itself.

Far down in the late years of the nineteenth century, Victoria Woodhull suggested that women, denied the vote, declare their independence of the United States and set up a new government of their own. And even more recently, a boycotting of all men by all women was gaily and with supposed originality advocated as the way to bring the brutes to their knees and secure not only the suffrage, but all welfare legislation. "Old and young are fellows."

So much for what Aspasia taught Socrates; and Socrates taught Xenophon and Aristophanes and Plato; and Plato taught the world. But Pericles died; Aspasia sank into obscurity; Athens killed off Socrates; and Plato continued

to philosophize for philosophers. Athens went on its way. The idea of great mothers for a great race bided its time.

To be sure, there was a conception of the part to be played by great mothers in Sparta, Athens' rival. But Sparta's ideal of great men was not men of brilliant minds, men of genius, but men of brawn, supreme fighters, disciplined bodies, heroic self-control, loyalty to the state. Happiness and life itself were of no importance, only Sparta victorious. For this, girls must be trained as well as boys. Their bodies must go through gallant discipline, exercising naked in the cold. They must be self-contained and independent and devoted through life and death; and every one of them must breed brave strong sons for Sparta. They tussled and wrestled before men and with men, just as men exercised before them. Did not such freedom result in immorality? From time immemorial, men have asked that question with trepidation about women's liberty. Sparta's answer was that the adulterer was unknown in its proud little state.

For three hundred years, Sparta's plan worked. But, so far as women were concerned, it had one fatal weakness. It forgot them as soon as they had fulfilled the function of bearing children. For the older man there was always war and the preparation for war, but the mother had her children taken away from her to be educated by the state, and for the rest of life she had nothing to do except idle away her days. She grew soft and luxurious, and as always happens, as was she, so he became. Sparta's muscles grew flabby and her heroism not much more than a tradition.

Twice there were flare-ups, both instigated by women, to restore the old splendidly valiant days, and both attempts ended in tragic failure, where the women laid down their lives beside their men, victims to resentment against those who would stir idleness into energy.

The last story is of a woman, beautiful and stern.

Cleomenes, the leader of the revolutionary group, was in prison with his followers. They broke out through their bars and made a desperate attempt to stir up the masses—a vain attempt. There was nothing left them but death, as they well knew, so they determined to die their own way instead of by an executioner. One by one they went, while the youngest and most beautiful of them all, Panteus, was ordered to wait to the end, to see that everything was in order. So, last, he went about and disposed them decently, threw his arms around his dead king Cleomenes, kissed him, and killed himself. Panteus' beauty is recalled because every Greek had a part of his mind fixed on physical perfection. It was fine for young men to die on the battlefield, because their bodies were lovely as they lay cold and glorified, whereas old age, dead, had no such charm.

Then all the wives of these, Sparta's last heroes, were ordered executed, and Panteus' young wife, exquisitely lovely, performed the same office for her elders, comforting them, and laying out their bodies; then disposing her garments decently before she offered her neck to the executioner.

"Thus," says Plutarch, "Lacedemon conducted a dramatic contest in which the women vied with the men and showed, in her last days that virtue cannot be affronted by Fate."

As if Greece mocked her own theoretic scorn of women, she has left us, as the Hebrew did, names that play through our thought: Athena, of the spear and helmet, goddess of wisdom and power; Helen of the eternal beauty; Penelope the faithful and industrious; Antigone, cold to herself, impassioned martyr to her obligations; Sappho and Aspasia among the immortals.

Chapter IV

WIVES AND MOTHERS AND ETERNAL ROME

Some seven hundred odd years before Christ, a gang of young toughs set out to found a new city. It was a masculine performance. They ran short of wives. Naturally they remedied the situation by the then-accredited method of stealing girls from their neighbors, and, inevitably, the result, after due preparation on both sides, was war, little battle line against little battle line, with all the panoply of shield and sword, until, suddenly, with a whirl of stolas, the pilfered wives threw themselves between fathers and husbands, lifting new-born babies, the link between them all, and father threw down his sword to embrace the just hated son-in-law. This was the first important pacifist movement started by women. Not only was it instantly successful, but it resulted in an immediate League of Nations between these two insignificant groups, Romans and Sabines. They joined in the establishing of what was to be some day the mighty city of Rome. And to the eternal memory of this part played by their wives, they instituted Mothers' Day, the "Matronalia," the commemoration of heroic mothers. So at least once in every twelve months, Romans remembered that women had shared in creating the imperial-minded town. Proud, dignified, the matrons made a festival of that first of March, before the altars of Juno, queen of gods. Husbands gave gifts to wives.

So Rome started out with stories of a different type of women from those of Greece, not lovely pawns like Helen and her younger sisters, but women who dared and thought

and acted with something of the freedom of men. The legends of these women were told again and again to boys and girls around that center of home life, the fireside, along with the standard-fixing tales of men who created the spirit of the city to be. There were girls like Cloelia, who led her band of ten captive girls to swim across the Tiber in escape from the Etrurian camp and so made herself worthy of a statue on the Sacred Way, to be remembered along with Horatius who kept the bridge against an army in that same traditional war. There was the virtuous housewife, Lucretia. No chattel, she, of whatever man ventured to steal her beauty. She saved her life only long enough to pledge her men folk to vengeance and then stabbed herself to inflame them the more, as well as to secure her own self-respect. Imagine a Helen of Troy living up to such a test. There was the wise Egeria, advisor of King Numa, so faithful that when her lover died she melted away in a fountain of tears. There was the wiser Sybil of Cumae who gave to Rome the laws that were to the city what the Mosaic code was to the Israelites.

After the long ancient centuries during which women learned their lesson of submission and self-sacrifice, it became the fate of Rome to find that women were people, not only *a* woman here and there, but *women.*

Like a great procession behind all the women-stories one might tell of Rome marches the great order of Vestal Virgins, who for eleven hundred years—as long as from us back to Charlemagne—showed in their own persons everything that was the glory of Rome, still further glorified and refined by womanhood.

Deep in the blood of us to this day is a trace of the old feeling about fire. To the ancient, it was wonder perpetual, sacred, mysterious, and the source of life and means of labor. Moreover, it was hard to get. So the center of the city was the fire altar. The Virgin goddess, Vesta, sat "in

the middle of the mansion, receiving the choicest portions of the sacrifice, to be honored in all the temples of the gods." In Rome, this holy fire was put in charge of virgin priestesses, chosen from among the great families, spotless in body. A vestal kept her purity under penalty of being buried alive if she soiled it. In return, Rome gave her vestals honors and privileges and power such as matched a proud senator's. The flame must be kept forever alive, the mother of every little fire in every home. And in the homes themselves, under every roof tree, the lady of the household, the "domina," guarded her family fire and became its priestess.

"Fire is to be worshiped as the principle of all things in nature. All other parts of matter, so long as they are without warmth, lie sluggish and dead," said the old philosopher.

So of all the great ladies of old Rome, the Virgin Vestals were the greatest. When Gauls invaded the city, the Vestals' mission was to flee, carrying the germ of it to safety until it could come home again. No shut-in nuns, however, were they, for they went abroad secure in their own integrity. Theirs the best seat in the circus when games became the passion of Rome. If a condemned criminal were so fortunate as to meet one of them as he went toward execution, he was immediately pardoned and free. There must be no stain on them, even of family shame. For example, the daughter of a divorced couple was refused entrance to the sacred body, no matter how great a name she bore. When a certain Cornelia was elected a head Vestal, Tiberius gave her eighty-seven thousand dollars as a glorification gift, and later, as a kind of consolation prize to the daughter of Fonteius Agrippa when she lost the election, he made a present of over four hundred thousand.

It was literally a matter of keeping the home fires burning, for the center of this worship was the hearthstone and

around it every act of family life had its religious observance. The man of the house was not only the father; he was the priest. His wife was not only mother; she was assistant priestess. The old Romans had this advantage over us, that they not only called marriage a sacrament, but pagans as they were, they remembered every day that maintaining a family was a sacrament.

Every Roman home was a factory, superintended by its domina, the administrator of industries, the ruler of home slaves. And either at home or abroad, the Roman lady had liberties and dignities of which the Athenian wife never dreamed. "Many things that among the Greeks are considered improper and unfitting are permitted by our customs," said Cornelius Nepos. "Is there by chance a Roman who is ashamed to take his wife to a dinner away from home? Does it happen that the mistress of the home in any family does not enter the anterooms frequented by strangers and show herself among them? Not so in Greece." But Rome believed in catching her girls young and moulding their individuality to their fate while they were plastic. The Vestals entered their celibate order somewhere between six and ten years of age, and it was the custom for girls to be married between thirteen and sixteen.

Over against the traditions and the stories of women of energy, power, character, stood the law—the same old strangling law. Which should finally prevail?

Under the law, it must have been bitter many a time to be both an old Roman and a slave. To be a Roman meant to have, born deep inside, self-respect that sometimes touched the heights of arrogance, the sense of dominion and a profound belief in right and justice; but to be a woman—no matter what characteristics seethed in her blood—was to be a thing. One little temple called Viri Placa was set aside for unhappy wives who needed divine help. Doubtless it was a much frequented spot.

Hard and cruel and wooden, the old laws seem to us, and it is quite evident that from an early time they began to seem hard and cruel and wooden to more and more Roman women, who had born in them that sense of personal pride and of justice that was Roman heritage. In spite of the fact that she was a piece of property, the Roman lady was no Oriental. She was not hidden away in dark rooms. But here custom and habit contended with law. By law the Roman woman was as much a slave as her Greek sister. She was in perpetual tutelage either to her father or to her husband. She could not own her own children, her own life, her own soul. If she committed a crime, it was her husband who was legally liable, for she was a nothing in his control. But inside of her, the Roman woman was the daughter of her father, with some of the eternal Roman sense of self-respect, some of the Roman dignity and power and demand for freedom. So very early in the game she began to see and to seek her way around law; and, with Roman astuteness, she perceived that the source of independence was the power to control property. She began her fight for dower rights, the settlement of some part of the money of her father upon herself instead of putting it all in the possession of her husband, particularly if that husband—as he had an ancient right to do—put her away on any pretext that suited him, without fault on her part, if, like the negro of today, "he jes' nat'lly los' his taste fo' her."

With the same kind of mind that her husband had, the Roman woman began to desire to be a real person; and so, out of the old traditions and out of her life experience, something grew up greater than the law itself. She saw that if she was going to be a person and not a slave, in addition to property right, she must gain some freedom in marriage, and the two were linked together. To be sure, the first tradition we have of her rebellion against things as

they were is a pretty ugly one As husbands could divorce wives, but wives could not divorce husbands, wives began to look around for efficient methods of getting rid of the men who ruled them but whom they hated. About three hundred and thirty years B.C., a number of prominent men died suddenly and with agony. Then came a creeping little maid servant to whisper to the authorities of secret poison-brewing on the part of her mistress and other great ladies. Twenty or thirty of these rebel women, summoned by the authorities, proclaimed their innocence, held a hasty council of war with each other and saw that their easiest way out of their impossible dilemma was to offer to drink immediately some of the suspected poison themselves. This they did. We are told that a hundred and seventy patrician women met their death at this time. There was another epidemic of husband poisoning later, and apparently a good many individual cases, so that the great comedian of later days warns husbands to be wary of eating dishes prepared by their wives. After all, divorce was a milder remedy than poison. The right of women to initiate divorce action gradually grew up.

There were three forms of marriage in Rome, *confarreatio*, the ancient and dignified religious ceremony when priests consulted entrails, and the bride with her torch bearers, her hair parted by a spear, the square flame-colored veil on her head, ate together with her new husband a sacred cake, and was lifted over the threshold of her future home so that the gods should be fooled and not see that a new person had entered the family; second, there was *coemptio*, more frankly brutal, a kind of pretended sale when a coin was laid in a scale and the wife became the purchased property of her lord. In any case, marriage was a business transaction. There is no word for courtship in the Latin tongue. Third, there was *usus*, a common law marriage, when a girl was, as it were, lent to a husband though

she still remained the property of her father. Anything of which a man had undisputed ownership for a year, became his, so the condition by which a woman might remain free of her husband's full property rights was that she should go out from his house three nights in each year. At first this free and easy method of matrimony was confined to the mere plebeians, the lower classes, but its obvious advantages to the woman made it more and more popular with great ladies. Father, far off in another house, was not so insistent a master as husband, ever near. Moreover, daughters inherited equally with sons. If there were some way, like this, by which they were practically guests of the men who called them wives, this money remained their own. Rich women began to appear in Rome and they took the first steps in interesting themselves in the laws under which they lived.

When Rome's great enemy, Carthage, hovered at her gates, women poured out their treasure to swell the public purse. Trinkets and coins tinkled into the treasury. But when the fear was lifted, the Oppian Law that restricted their clothes and jewels and made them into drab little frumps instead of the gorgeous creatures that they loved to be, seemed to them a useless bit of oppression. Never had Rome seen such lobbying, such throwing aside of all meekness and restraint. The city seethed with legislators and with women. Old Cato (so sharp-tongued a grouch that it was said he would not be allowed to die because Pluto, the god of the next world, was afraid he would bite) fulminated against these outrageous females. All virtue and family honor would go to the dogs if women were allowed to wear many colored robes and ear-rings. He shrieked that these outrageous creatures were trying to overthrow the dominion of men. "What business is it of theirs what laws are passed? What concern is it of theirs what men do with their money?"

Yet still women came pouring on into the very holy of holies of the law-makers in insistent and voluble flocks. Good old-type Romans trembled. The outcries of the stand-patters have a strangely familiar sound. "As soon as they have begun to be your equals, they will be your superiors!" added old Cato, who had such ideas about wives that he once lent his to his intimate friend. One would have thought the world was in danger of going to pieces because women wanted gold fringes. On the other side were such as Lucius Valerius, who contended that there was no danger to the state in rescinding a law less than twenty years old, and that the women were right. The stern old Senate shivered and weakened. The feminine "influence," the feminine lobby, had succeeded. Women put on their ornaments in the very midst of the assembly and went out dancing. And still Rome grew in dominion.

Still another hundred years and there came Hortensia, whose moving speech before the fathers rose sonorously above their trepidation while outside of the hall they were aware of a mob expectant and menacing, all on the side of the women. Said Hortensia:

"Let war with the Gauls or the Parthians come and we shall not be inferior to our mothers in zeal for the common safety, but for *civil* wars may we never contribute nor even assist against each other. *Why should we pay taxes when we have no part in the honors, the commands, the statecraft for which ye contend against one another so disastrously?*"

So the principle of "no taxation without representation" did not originate in American colonies, but in the mouth of a Roman woman long before Christ. No wonder furious triumvirs drove her from the assembly—and it was only the tumultuous crowd on the streets that sided with her that kept her from a worse fate.

Gradually, gradually, as the years slipped by, women's

rights to their own property, their independence in marriage relations, their participation in public affairs, grew up, as it were, by custom. Sometimes laws were modified, sometimes they were ignored, but so immense was the gulf between the old Rome and the new that one of the greatest authorities of the nineteenth century, Sir Henry Maine, says, "No society which preserves any tincture of Christian institutions is likely to restore to married women the personal liberty conferred by the middle Roman law." (One wishes the good Sir Henry could have lived into the twentieth century.)

But the lifting of women was not merely nor even chiefly a political or legal game. It grew chiefly out of finer conceptions of home relations. "Marriage is the union of a man and a woman and a partnership of all life, a mutual sharing of laws human and divine," said Modestinus. No one could ask a nobler definition. And Seneca: "Who said that Nature had acted scurvily with the characters of women and had contracted their virtues into a narrow sphere? Equal force, believe me, is possessed by them; equal capability for what is honorable." And St. Augustine, long after, quotes an elder Roman, "It would be unjust that a husband should demand a fidelity which he himself does not keep."

While Roman men were thinking thoughts fairer than the world was to match again until quite modern times, thoughts that grew out of their marvelous genius for law and justice of which all later times have taken lessons, actual women were living lives that justified every better conception of man-and-woman relationship.

A highly uncomfortable experience it would be to find a pair of snakes comfortably coiled in one's bed. If it befell us we should tell the tale of it for many years; but when it happened to a good old orthodox Roman like Tiberius Gracchus, he hastened him to the soothsayers before he

even took vengeance on the snakes. Strange and untoward events had always a portentous meaning. "Neither kill the snakes nor let them go," said the priest. "Kill one. If you slay the male, you yourself will soon die; if you despatch the female, it presages your wife's death. You may take your choice." So old Tiberius meditated deeply. He was the head of a great family; he had been censor; twice consul—the highest political office in the old republic; and twice again he had had the thrill of a "triumph," that supreme day when a conqueror was welcomed by his joyous city, in through the gate triumphal, crowned with laurels along the Sacred Way all the senate marching ahead, with trumpets and horns sounding, with the names of those he had conquered blazoned on signs, the white bull led by the high priest for sacrifice, generals, and tramping legions. He must have known, as all the city knew, that he was held higher for his virtue than for even civic or military honors. Tiberius had reason to think well of himself and to feel that his life was valuable. On the other hand, he was getting on in life, while his lovely wife was young and entitled to many years. Moreover, he loved her. So he slew the male snake. Perhaps, after all, old Gracchus chose the easier way. At any rate, when we look back through twenty-two hundred years, those few extra years of life do not seem so important.

Some years ago, there came to this country Rudolfo Lanciani, the man who had charge of the Italian government's excavations into the buried treasures of that much-experienced land. Perhaps the way his eyes blazed as he shook his big mane of hair when he told about this marvelously exciting adventure of digging and dredging has colored our thoughts of old Italy. One can never forget that at the bottom of the Tiber, for instance, in a series of layers stretching down to deep, deep ooze there lie deposits after deposits of things growing older and older the deeper

they are. They are a condensed story of age-old Rome, coins, statues, fragments of architecture, back, back, back from today to the very far days when Rome was a little primitive settlement. And once in a while Professor Lanciani hauled out of the waters a perfect statue of bronze, an exquisite work of art, that had been lying there in the mud for hundreds of years.

Cornelia is like one of these statues. The beautiful young matron was left with twelve children to "carry on." Evidently there was no child clinic or infant-welfare movement in those days, for only three of the brood lived to grow up. In fact, it was necessary to have big families if one wanted any family at all. No wonder they had an altar to Verminus, the god of microbes, and another to Cloacina, goddess of typhoid, in the old city seamed between her eternal hills by malarial marshes. But never was there a beautiful woman fixed among greater family traditions than the beloved Cornelia. Not only was there the illustrious husband, who, as all Rome knew, had so loved her that he willed to die that she might live, but she was the daughter of Rome's idol hero, the Scipio who had beaten into a humiliating peace the enemy that had made the young city tremble as no foe had ever done before, Scipio, forever called Africanus, because he had laid Carthage low and saved Rome from the African whom they thought invincible, Scipio, who yet, after their first burst of gratitude for life and liberty, had been so heckled by petty politicians that his daughter had also learned the lesson of grinding endurance through insult and misfortune.

No wonder Cornelia thought in terms of courage and patriotism. No wonder that she steeped herself in the stories of Rome's heroic men and—yes,—heroic women. No wonder that it became part of her being to make herself the mother of great men, as she was the daughter and the wife of great men.

One sees Cornelia like her father, with "a certain princely grace and majesty," gentle, courteous, with a rare gift of winning affection, grave in gesture and behavior. Early each March with other matrons, she went up to the temple of Juno on the Esquiline to celebrate the Matronalia, the day when Rome remembered its debt to its historic mothers. They did it in a much more dignified way than we keep Mother's Day. They did it with pomp and procession and wreaths and sacrifice. Among these patrician ladies the young Cornelia stood supreme. The repute of her beauty, her wit and wisdom, her virtue, spread across the Mediterranean, so that King Ptolemy, of Egypt, asked her hand in marriage. But she chose to stay in her home on the Palatine, a widow, a Roman, a mother of sons.

But to add to the tradition of husband and father that she was using to educate those sons, came a new link with a great man when her daughter married the younger Scipio, Aemilianus. Not many Roman men, great though they were, can be called charming. Scipio Aemilianus should lead the list. He belongs in the group of fascinators. But Scipio was not only a charmer; he was, like his adopted grandfather, a hero, the second conqueror of Carthage, the subjugator of Spain to the yoke of the growing Roman imperialism. Long afterward, Cornelia was criticized as goading her sons into their tumultuous career by reproaching them with the fact that she was publicly called the mother-in-law of Scipio when she would have preferred to be called the mother of the Gracchi.

There are some little human, homely things about this Scipio that play their part in the domestic relations that centered around Cornelia. It was just about this time that we begin to be aware of how agitated Roman women were about clothes and jewels. Cornelia belonged to that little senate of women, a sort of prevision of a woman's club, with a government sanction, that discussed and settled

standards of virtue, good manners, and also matters of fashionable dressing; should shoes be red or green; how should one decorate one's sedan with ivory and gold; who had precedence over whom in processions. To be sure, the ladies of old Rome were more sensible than we. They had found out a lovely and satisfactory way of dressing, and they stuck to it for a thousand years with no currying to the dictatorship of dressmakers. But they did like a variety of color and ornament, and they loved to flaunt their gorgeousness at religious festivals and shows. They did not, however, lay their hands on lovely material and cut it up in little pieces and sew these together again. They showed it in majestic folds.

Scipio Aemilianus received from his adopted grandmother a great fortune, with all her magnificent dresses, carriages, train of maidservants, baskets and cups of gold and silver for sacrifice. Shortly after Aemilia's death, Scipio's mother, who had been divorced and living in hidden poverty, appeared in the streets with all these gorgeous trappings, even to the mules of Aemilia. Scipio had handed them over to her. "And," says Polybius, "this act would have been thought honorable elsewhere, but at Rome it was quite astonishing, for there no one ever thinks of giving away any of his private property to any one if he can help it." All Roman women exploded with admiration. The historian reminds us that women are talkative and in no way could Scipio have built up so great a reputation in so short a time. Women were all partisans of Scipio. Perhaps it was a good political investment. Perhaps it was simply a generous impulse. One likes to think the latter, for of all the great families of old Republican Rome, the Scipios always seem to be the nearest to the type of modern gentlemen.

Then came those terrible years of tumult and suspense and war for Rome in far-off lands, or still more savagely in

the streets at home, when one of Cornelia's sons made the name of Tiberius Gracchus greater than his father had left it, as he fought for popular rights against the very aristocrats with whom he was allied, alienated his patrician brother-in-law, was struck down in a royal battle between patricians and plebeians near the very Capitol itself, and left himself an immortal fame as the defender of the rights of common folk. Caius, his younger brother, went the same glorious and bloody way to death.

The good, gossipy old Plutarch tells us that although the two sons were of the noblest origin and had the happiest disposition of all the Roman youth, yet Cornelia's education had contributed more to their characters than had Nature.

Then long, quiet years shadowed by memory, but not allowed to be dark. All the great men of Rome came to the home of the lovely woman. They asked her advice in public matters, in which she was sane and wise. They talked with her about the new ideas that were creeping into the city soon to be imperial. Then came darkness, and Cornelia's dearest wish found fruition, for on the monument that the city built above her body was inscribed only: "The mother of the Gracchi."

No woman can help loving Cornelia as a person: the exquisite girl, the woman whose heart and mind were filled with ambitions for greatness not for herself, but for those she loved, the tender yet all-demanding mother, the symbol of all that is finest in Rome, relieved of its stern old ruggedness by something wholly feminine.

Meanwhile, never was a more striking example of sidestepping than when our Roman sisters circumnavigated stern old laws and laid their hands on freedom, money and power. The little town was growing big, and the small dominion expanding into empire, and the rigorous austerity of early times was flinging itself into profligacy. Palaces

and crowded streets, luxuries from every land and jewels of the world followed merchants and pleasure experts into the walls of Rome. The proud race that conquered the world left the bodies of its men on every shore and in far-off forests and deserts, and, as though by a whirlpool, the sacred city sucked into herself every great thing and every foul thing from the races which she subdued. All roads, literally, led to Rome, and all feet traveled the roads. Her narrow streets roared with the crowds and with the voice of hucksters or revelers, the grave and the gay, the chariot and the sedan chair. Magnificent palaces and still more splendid temples lifted themselves, one day to be the plunder of every savage conqueror. Ten thousand statues decorated her breast. Gardens and parks bloomed, and from far hills and mountains, streams were drawn into those fountains that still make Rome the wonder water city of the world, and that were even in those old days, piped to every house. The Roman became no longer a soldier, but an idler supported by the wealth of the countries of the world that his forebears had fought to conquer, and willing to turn over all the duties and all power to a few men whom the lust of ambition and civil conflict involved in a network of political intrigue.

Old marriage strictness slipped into license too. Gradually the story of Egnatius Mecenas putting a wife to death for sipping wine began to sound almost as obsolete to Roman ears as it does to ours. Caesar might demand that his wife should be above suspicion, but he is said to have given another lady, Servilia, a pearl worth a quarter of a million. Lollia Paulina wore emeralds and pearls worth two hundred thousand dollars to a wedding, and money was then worth much more than it sounds to our modern ear.

But while there was such personal extravagance, the Romans had a kind of public thrift. The modern Italian historian, Ferrero, says that the Roman Empire at its

greatest had a budget less than New York City today, and that while we continually try to increase both our wants and our production, the ancients were always trying to lessen their wants and to extol simplicity. We want fashion. They wanted permanence.

The "free marriage" made it possible for the wife to control her own money. What could one expect when little girls of thirteen or fourteen who had grown up in absolute seclusion were suddenly thrown into this tumultuous, luxury-mad world of Rome, given absolute freedom and enormous wealth, and married to men who neither knew anything about them nor thought of loving them? "Any animal or slave or any article of clothes or dish is tested before purchase, but never the bride by the groom," said Seneca. Sometimes the little maid who had been kept in strictest seclusion during her youthful days, when she found out what liberty and license went with wedded estate, contracted a kind of mock-marriage, paying for the nominal husband that law required, for there were no old maids permitted in Rome. Such a husband might be a freedman, over whom she maintained control; or perhaps a husband made over his estate to his wife in order to evade debts, just as in more modern days. Women had their own pet lawyers. "Who is that curly-haired mannikin who never leaves your wife's side, is always whispering in her ear and supporting her chair? Her business manager?" Martial asks in a play. Circus and play became places for display of magnificent clothes, and one could hire this gorgeousness for a day. Women had furores about favorite actors or gladiators or poets according as their tastes in men were literary or heroic. Dilettanti from Greece read verses aloud to great ladies, who, in turn, true bluestockings, bored the gentlemen next whom they sat at dinner by insisting on discussing these high-brow matters, or correcting their husbands' grammar.

New-fashioned cults in religion crept among women—the worship of the mystic Isis from Egypt, or Bacchus from Greece, the easy-going, self-abandoning God. It is said that the first Roman document of any size left is a decree of the Senate dating back nearly two hundred years before Christ and intended to restrain women against excesses in the worship of Bacchus. Oriental rites and eastern magic intoxicated people who had lost all their austere ways but had no delicacy of taste to hold them back. Every wealthy home swarmed with slaves, ingenious and clever Greeks or sensual offscourings from the east, and one can imagine how demoralizing such surroundings were. Women like Clodia became political experts in times of terrific and wire-pulling upheaval. Clodia ran a great salon of the most brilliant men and the outstanding politicians. A fine lady, she, with a scorn for the populace. Her wit was the day's talk, her dancing a marvel. An ancient equivalent for Bohemianism ran its course in her halls. But she knew how to manipulate the powers that be, and when she came to hate Cicero drove him into exile, from which he kept writing back to Rome to ask, sub rosa, what she was doing and thinking. She could revenge herself on the bold Caelius who dared to jilt her, by bringing him close to ruin. Both of these men have left their vituperations of Clodia.

There was Fulvia—once in her career the wife of Marc Antony—breeder of plots and seditions, she; now killing an enemy; now naming praetors and public officials; now decreeing a public triumph for a favorite; now selling the government of provinces for fat fees. She too was the enemy of Cicero, the incorruptible, and one can fairly see her in her ivory chair, reaching out to receive with gloatings his aged head and to run a needle through the lifeless tongue that had opposed her, to show how she hated him dead as she had hated him living. There was many a one

such as Fulvia, bad, cruel, sensual. But Fulvia made her badness glitter with braininess.

In all this, women at last were people. Sometimes pure and admirable and lovely people. Sometimes as wild or as subtle as the Bacchus and the Egyptian Isis whose worship lured them. But the ventures of women into the game of politics were not always selfish. Caesar's daughter, Julia, wife of Pompey, became so great a factor in keeping peace between husband and father that when she died the public demanded for her a magnificent funeral and a burial place in the Campus Martius, as a tribute. There are those that think the famous legend of Cleopatra of Egypt was not so much a love tale, as the story of the fight between two women in politics, the eastern queen using all her ineffable lure and her beauty to build up the political power of her kingdom and to save it from the universal subjection to Rome, and, on the other side, Octavia, putting forth the claims of the nobler wifehood and patriotism to hold her husband to imperial ambitions. When the good wife failed, war followed, but Rome, as always for hundreds of years, proved the victor.

Cornelia was the magnificent type of the great lady of old Rome. Between the old and the fast-slipping new, stands the fascinator of the greatest of all emperors, Augustus. This other woman—as real and vivid as Cornelia, forever alluring, the storm center of the very apex of Roman history, she who sat on a throne in the middle of things at the very time when Christ was born in an inconspicuous corner of the empire—is Livia. Livia, too, was very beautiful—lovely not in the self-contained, dignified way of Cornelia, but enchanting, fascinating, intellectual, and wise in the ways of the world. Nobody in Rome had hated Cornelia. Many people hated and feared Livia. She was a great enigma, and an enigma they had to consider because of her enormous power.

Young Octavius, when she became his bride, was on the threshold of his career. He was adopted heir to Julius Caesar; plunged into the civil rows that followed great Caesar's death; broke with Antony when that famous lover deserted his wife, Octavius' sister, to follow the lure of Egypt's Cleopatra; and finally made himself master of the world, and was called Augustus. Perhaps it was because of the loveliness of another man's wife, perhaps it was because marriage with her would cement his power by linking him to a whole chain of great families, that the young dictator used his new authority brutally enough. Three months before Livia's baby was to be born, Augustus divorced his own wife, Scribonia, compelled Livia's husband to divorce her also, and immediately married the beauty himself.

No one knows what Livia, little nineteen-year-old Livia, thought of this husband switching. But then Rome for generations was full of tragic women, handed around arbitrarily from husband to husband to serve political ends; a new husband, willy-nilly, whenever a new party affiliation took place. Girl that she was, Livia had already borne two sons. And she had known vicissitude, for she had gone with her first husband into hasty exile during a political upheaval, and later she was to remember with favors the Grecians who treated them kindly. Now she was to play empress to the first all-world ruler who, because he was called imperator, commander, gave us our word, "emperor," and because he belonged to the Caesar family, gave us our words "czar" and "kaiser." That she was canny as well as beautiful is shown by her holding the all-powerful's affections for fifty years of absolute power, while divorces seethed all around them and it was easy to trade aging wives for attractive new young things. The last words of Augustus are said to have been, "Adieu, Livia. Remember our long life together."

That was a very wonderful court life over which young Livia presided. The *Pax Romana* hung over all the weary world after two hundred years of constant war. Little people, common people, everywhere, no longer plundered, became safe and industrious. Poets and artists and musicians flocked from Greece and Alexandria to Augustus. Jewels and the new-discovered silk fabrics and exquisite artistry piled up in Rome. And through it all Augustus and Livia tried to live the simple life.

Livia believed in the old virtues, for all her flashing beauty and her extraordinary power to play politics. She kept old Roman traditions. She superintended her household. The emperor wore no toga that was not woven by her slaves, under her direction, from the good old wool of Rome. She knew when and where to buy, in days when there was no such steady reliable flow of goods as we have now in every city. She knew how to preserve these fruits in wine and how to dry those; how to bury nuts so that they would keep; how to card and spin and weave. The Emperor once thought it important enough for him to deliver an address to the senate on how Livia kept house and how she ordered her days, up early and ready to ply her loom or to meet poets or diplomats or grave statesmen as an equal. All great public affairs were discussed with her by Octavius Augustus Caesar, but when, perchance, some upheaval took place in a distant province, or some lofty person toppled from his pedestal, Livia kept very quiet, and took no responsibility to herself. She was not like some of the brazen, intriguing political ladies, like Clodia, for example. Moreover, she and Augustus set out to maintain good old Roman morality by law. They lived in an era of change. They could not control it, but they thought they could. They and some literary men about their court thought with Horace: "Our fathers were worse than our grandsires; we have deteriorated from our fathers; our sons

will cause us to be lamented." Horace vituperated those who had invented boats and so lured people to far travel, and he had a prevision someone might even "attempt the air!"

So with Livia's help Augustus made moral laws. Exile for marital infidelity; no wanton luxury; workday meals not more than ten dollars; parties, fifteen dollars; wedding feasts, fifty dollars; let every woman marry early and have three children by the time she is twenty!

Yet luxury was hard to keep out. When Augustus' little house burned down, he bought near-by places and built a bigger one. He had natural history and prehistoric collections. And there was the country house. The remains of Livia's are still left. Magnificent as were Rome's great squares, her temples, her fountains, one was not allowed to use a carriage on the narrow, crowded streets; but Livia had her litter, ivory and gold, borne by eight magnificently garbed slaves out to the gate of the city, and then the pony carriage with its metal-foliage trimmings and purple hangings—that she might not be kissed by people that wanted favors—and so on to the sprawling, lovely villa, with great gardens, wall-inclosed, walks shaded with trimmed box, all trees of cypress or ilex or what you will, cut into fantastic shapes of lions and bears and twisting serpents.

Poor Livia and Augustus! The great modern Italian historian, Ferrero, says Augustus ruled his empire—Italy, France, England, Spain, the Netherlands, Austria, Greece and the Near East, Egypt—with two thousand officials and an army of two hundred thousand. But he could not rule his own daughter.

This Julia was as charming as her stepmother, Livia, but she, laughter loving, gay, untamed, wilful, was the apostle of change and the first to disobey her father's laws. Julia was as typical and baffling a flapper as though she had lived

in the twentieth century. They did the very worst thing for her, for Livia made up her mind that her son by her first husband should be the next Caesar after Augustus, and to bring this about, he was ordered to divorce his wife and marry gay little Julia, who loathed him as he loathed her. Tiberius loved his wife; he didn't want to divorce her. He was a bluff, vigorous, old-fashioned Roman soldier who had been Rome's safeguard against wild tribes on the north. What could he do with Julia? But fathers ordered, and sons and daughters obeyed.

The old annalists say that Tiberius was never able to see his ex-wife without bursting into tears. His new wife, Julia, met her lover by night near the statue of Marsyas close to the Sacred Forum. She wore silk when Livia wore wool. She threw away money on wanton display. All Rome whispered and winked and cackled with dirty scandals. Tiberius dared not divorce the emperor's daughter; but at last the poor broken-hearted father, he who sat so high, Imperator Caesar, bent to his own law and the lovely, gay Julia went into exile, as did her lover also—exile desolate, ugly, lonely, far from everything she loved. After Augustus' death, when Tiberius, the husband who hated her so, had come into the imperial power, she was starved to death by his orders.

After Livia and Julia came women whose very names are remembered forever for their self-abandonment. Messalina and Agrippina, successive wives of the emperor Claudius, are as famous for their wickedness as for their dominion over the dotard husband who was nominally a god-called Caesar. Caligula elevated his grandmother and both his sisters to godhood and made people worship them. The word "univira" came into being, namely "a one-man woman," to describe that exceptional female who had not been divorced; but one must remember that it was men who did the divorcing until late in the empire, and that such

divorces were mostly but plays in political games or in the struggles for wealth and place. Families stood by each other in lawsuits and politics. But one can hardly call it marriage, when, like Thesalina in one of Martial's plays, a woman could have ten husbands in one month.

Wicked women flourished in high places. But there is another side more significant, just as the real life of millions means more than the history that gets written in tales of war and conquest.

There were myriads of homes that were still busy as hives and full of well-ordered serviceable life. Matrons knew every housewifely art that Livia had practiced. They were thrifty home-buyers. They laid in stores when food and stuffs were cheap. They spun, and wove and baked.

And outside the home, women were going into business. They were weavers, fishmongers, bar-maids and costumers. They took charge of estates. They were traders and manufacturers. One of the great brick-making firms of the Empire that used its bricks all over Europe, was headed by Domitia Lucilla and her daughter. Women, often Greek women in Rome, became physicians, and Soranus, of the second century, advises such sharers in private life to be very discreet, as "affairs of the household and life-secrets of every one will be entrusted to you." Whether there was medical skill in old days, one may learn by looking at ancient surgical instruments dug up at Pompeii and now in the Naples Museum. They were unequalled again until the nineteenth century. Perhaps some of the feminine patients came from among the little girls who were kept, like our ancestresses, in tight stays through their growing years in order to preserve their figures. Perhaps some of them were among the nervous, hysterical women who were, like ourselves, developed by an over-stimulated life. There were many such in the Roman Empire. These ladies also discovered faith cures, miracles at the altars of favorite

gods, and some of them erected stones to the "Bona Dea" that had saved them. At least two women tried to play lawyers and conduct their own cases. Of course they were called "she men," and described as monsters, just as they were in the nineteenth century, so perhaps, as our sole authorities are men who foamed at the mouth before such a situation, we may take these stories with a grain of salt.

During the hectic centuries there were still happy little people, who called their daughters by pet names, "birdie," and "little dove." One little girl is described: "She was not, in all, fourteen years old, and had the sagacity and dignity of a woman, with maidenly charm and virginal purity. She used to cling to her father's neck and lovingly and simply embrace his friends, love her nurses, and teachers, each after his right. She was zealous and intelligent in her studies. She played rarely well."

Still more does one love the innumerable middle-class monuments discovered after these many centuries, in which husbands commemorated loved wives. "Never have I endured aught of evil from her save her death." Or, "Amymone, wife of Marcius, rests here; good was she and fair; a busy spinner, a good housewife, chaste, modest, pious."

Chapter V

ON THE WAY TO BE SAINTS

A CROWDED arena looms in a great provincial city, its tiers of seats full of raging people with here and there a silent or awe-struck or questioning face. Below, on the sands the center of all the uproar and hatred, stands a slave girl, young and small of person. It is extraordinary that so insignificant a person should raise such a tumult. It is only a hundred years after Christ, yet somehow the love of Him has crept through the world. Rome has linked all Europe to her by roads that converge like threads into her mighty hand and seem to her the means of her eternal dominion, the paths of soldier legions, the avenues by which the luxuries from all countries should pour themselves into the roaring shops of Rome. But along those same roads, out from the center, were trudging simple unnoticed men, carrying the word that was to transform the very heart of the great city of cities. Legend has it that Mary and Martha and their brother Lazarus, risen from the dead and filled with his own evidence of the truth, found their way along the shores of the stretched-out Mediterranean and that two of them laid their bones in the ancient Phœnician-Greek-Roman city of Marseilles, and that Martha went on to the town of Tarascon, where her church stands today. Sure it is, Christianity arrived in Southern France very early.

So long as the inconspicuous girl slave Blandina served her Christian mistress inside home walls no one troubled much, even though more and more men and women began to creep in to talk about the new faith. Let them go un-

disturbed. Rome was well used to foreign religions. This was only one more, though, if you came to know about it, it was upsetting and revolutionary beyond other doctrines brought from afar. Then came a fear of barbarian invasion out of the dark woods that hung on the outskirts, and some one started a rumor that this menace was a judgment of the angry gods against a city that harbored Christians—a strange and fearful sect that drank human blood! The town of Lyons went mad. And soon it became evident that the strength of the worshipers of one God (Atheism that! to deny Jove and Venus!) lay not in the mighty, but in the unflinching person of the smallest and lowest of them all. It ought to be easy to crush. There was no powerful political influence behind it. Her mistress and the converts might have yielded before the storm, but not Blandina, and by some marvel this small girl kept the others to the faith. "Most violently did the leaders of the mob, the governor and the soldiers, rage against Blandina, in whom Christ made manifest that the things that appear mean and deformed and contemptible among men are most esteemed by God. She cherished that love to Him which evinces itself by fortitude and does not boast of mere profession. For whilst we were all trembling, and her earthly mistress, who was herself one of the contending martyrs, was apprehensive lest through the weakness of the flesh she should not be able to make a bold confession, Blandina was filled with such power that her ingenious tormenters, who relieved and succeeded each other from morning to night, confessed that they were overcome, and had nothing more that they could inflict on her."

"I am a Christian. No wickedness is carried on by us," was the girl's simple answer to all accusations of unholy rites.

Fixed to a stake in the middle of the amphitheatre, the maid held up the courage of one after another of her fel-

low-faithful whom she had to see die in torture around her. Finally "she went forth for the last time, as if she were invited to a marriage feast, and not to be cast, as she was, in a net to be tossed to wild beasts."

Extraordinarily arresting was this Blandina. Many a woman of the ancient world had died for a man or for her country. But this new Christian woman was to die, and die exultantly, for an ideal. That was a thing difficult to understand unless, in sooth, you were of the little band of Christians.

Behind Blandina was already a transforming tradition. The Greek had said that the mother was not a parent. But here was the story of Mary, not only parent, but holy parent. The brooding creative power in every woman stirred to the great tale. In broken human ways, all followers of Christ partook of some experience like His. Only one (Highly favored, the Lord is with thee) could be Mary the Mother—but there was Elizabeth, who bore a prophet and was a cousin; there were Mary and Martha, friends and confidantes; there was the Mary the sinner redeemed; there were the four virgin daughters of Philip, "which did prophesy"; there was Lydia, seller of purple in Philippi, who first in all Europe became a Christian; Priscilla who taught and Phoebe who ministered. The story of them came with the first carriers of the old-new religion along the Roman highways that led to Africa and Gaul and Spain. And the heart of the new doctrine was revealed by homely stories, parables, that came out of that daily life that women understood, virgins who were too foolish to keep their lamps filled, the housewife who hunted her lost coin. It was an intimate every-day religion that yet stretched on into the infinite.

Jephthah's daughter died because her father had dedicated her, and Antigone died because her brother's blood called her, and Lucretia died because she could not live

without self-respect. But here was the humble of the earth great enough to *choose* torture and death because she was a soul. Christians were martyrs for an idea.

So no unusual story this was to become during the first centuries. It stands out because it made Blandina, a slave, in a far and unnoted town, among the first after the New Testament records in the noble army of martyrs whom Perpetua and Felicitas were to follow. All circumstances and surroundings and the very person of the steadfast maiden made her a forerunner of things to come and a marvel of the new woman of her day, a real person, capable of resisting all the world for her own ideals,—the precursor of the maid Joan of Arc, hovered over by visions that the earth could not see, and the immediate forerunner of quite another group of early Christian women, women of prestige and social distinction, who lowered all outward advantages in order to take on the same steadfast humility.

Later, in a provincial town, a group of upper-class women were, after the fashion of women of all ages, chatting together about their home affairs. The rest of them continued to look at Monica. She was different. Finally they ventured a personal and searching question: "How does it come that your face is not bruised or scarred like ours? Every one knows that your husband is a man of furious and ungoverned temper and we marvel that no one has ever heard even of Patricius beating his wife. Tell us, in confidence, how you manage it." Then Monica gave them a bit of timely advice, timely to the wife of the fourth century after Christ: "You have your own tongues to blame and not your husbands for the marks of shame you have on your faces. From the time when the marriage lines are read, you are to consider yourselves indentured servants." Monica never raised a question when her lord was in one of his furies, never argued. "Those who heeded her advice," her son said naïvely many years afterward,

"saved themselves. Those who did not, suffered." But she had a desperate task, with a mother-in-law who disliked and tormented her and a husband notorious in the little town for being all that a husband ought not to be, she a Christian, they two pagans. She bent like a reed before the wind, bent in everything that meant her will, her comfort, her personality, but in one thing she was adamant, her Christianity.

Is it funny, this episode of wives with scratched faces, or is it deep tragedy on which almost by chance and for a moment we lift the veil on the lives of past women. Monica was one, but there were thousands, myriads of other wise or foolish ones who somehow lived and loved and were loyal through years that we modern women would think killing to love. Once in a while they went mad and became furies..

Probably Patricius, Monica's husband, was of the same puzzled mind as another Roman husband who asked "How can I cure my wife of Christianity?" Here is the answer actually given by a brilliant pagan scholar: "Sooner couldst thou write on water or fly in the air than change the mind of thy guilty godless wife. Let her have her will, remain with her empty falsehoods, lament to her God with her faithless lips." Many a Roman husband was half dazed and helpless in face of this bewildering situation: "How can a woman so gentle be also inflexible?" With all his absolutism and his gusts of fury, Patricius regarded his wife with a kind of reverence. No tempest that beat upon her could loosen her from the Christ-love that lay at the center of her being and kept her serene and steady.

But Monica had a heavier cross than angry husband and vindictive mother-in-law in the son she loved. Augustine, like his father, began life as an idle and self-indulgent young fellow, with his father's tumultuous nature; but Monica never wavered. "The son of such tears cannot be

lost," a good bishop assured her. Almost worse than having her boy an agnostic or a pagan it was to see him become a victim of one of those heresies that buzzed like wasps around the early Church, for Augustine became a Manichaean. That word does not mean much in a world that has forgotten it. Manichaeanism has been defined as "a fantastic dualistico-pantheistic philosophy." Being plain folk we can put it into easier words. All the universe was two gods: night, darkness, sin, matter, was an evil god; day, light, goodness, spirit was the other god. One worshiped the good god, but it was wise to keep on the right side of the bad one, for the two were in continual war with each other in this world, and one wanted to make sure of being on good terms with the victor. It was a belief something like Augustine's own nature with furies always at war inside him. Through seventeen years, Monica prayed and wept and followed her boy as he shot from place to place driven by his restless energy until at last—at long last—it was as if the walls of Jericho fell. Her husband, Patricius, became a Christian before he died; the mother-in-law's ugliness melted into affection; and finally all the passion and energy and swift-mindedness of Augustine whirled away from his grotesque heresy and threw itself into a steady passion for the Catholic Church of his mother, an ardor that was to make him the greatest of the "fathers." It was as though an evil spirit had been driven out. Silence and power fell upon him. There is a lovely little picture in St. Augustine's Confessions of how he and she, mother and son, stood together by an open window looking down on the flowers and paths and far-away sea of a fine garden in Ostia, and talked together of the things that now at last both of them shared, "hushed the images of earth and waters and air, hushed also the poles of heaven, yea the very soul be hushed to herself." Only one thing Monica had desired: to see her son a Catholic Christian.

Here her prayer was realized. Life was slipping from her. He could not bear to have her die so far from home. "What do I here any longer?" she asked. "Nothing is far to God." So Monica became St. Monica, the mother of St. Augustine, and surely the special patron saint of any woman in any age who, as James Russell Lowell says, "hath her way through blissful gentleness."

If she had walked the streets of say Boston or Los Angeles yesterday, there could be no more vivid and living person than dear Paula. We know all about her, not only her outer history, but her lovable, understandable, ununderstandable self, a scholar, with her Greek and Hebrew (which she spoke and sang "without accent"), her devouring curiosity of mind that drove her into questions not only abstract, but also into travel and study of human beings; a wonderful executive who built and laid out the daily life for the first huge monastery for women, which was about as complicated a business when such things were new in the world, as administering a girls' college nowadays. All this kind of thing sounds like the brilliant woman of today, full of affairs and full of discussion of "problems." And when it comes to birth, no D.A.R. of us all could trace such a pedigree. For she came not only from Cornelia and the Gracchi and the Scipios of six hundred years before, but could boast of Agamemnon of Troy as her remoter ancestor, though perhaps it would have been difficult to prove this by actual papers; and her husband was of the proud Julian family that had once sprouted a Caesar.

Paula lived in a time that was absorbed in a "sex complex" which reminds one of this twentieth century, a time of luxury and self-indulgence and playing along the edge of moralities and immoralities. But just here there comes a sharp twist. It is as if one looked through a glass into an old-fashioned kaleidoscope and recognized every color and line; then, given a shake, every color and line is twisted to

an unrecognizable form. That was Rome, three hundred odd years after Christ, Rome officially and governmentally Christian, but deserted by its Emperor, who had gone to live at Constantinople, and still pagan in most of its ways of thinking and acting. It was crowded with pleasure-hunting men and women. And as for the rich women, myriads of them who ruled vast households of eunuchs and slaves, their lives were days of indolent luxury, "who paint their cheeks with rouge and their eyelids with antimony; they whose plastered faces, too white for human faces, look like those of idols, and if in a moment of forgetfulness they shed a tear, it makes a furrow in flowing down the painted cheek; who dress their heads with other people's hair and encrust a bygone youth upon the wrinkles of age and affect a virgin timidity in the midst of a troop of grandchildren." They rode out in chariots of gold and ivory, dressed in silken gauzes that were meant to reveal rather than hide the body. "There are others who are ashamed to be women as they were born, for they wear men's clothes, cut their hair short and walk about shamelessly!" These descriptions sound absurdly as though some critic of today might be thundering them from a modern pulpit, or writing them for a magazine, instead of St. Jerome in forgotten centuries. Everything there except the much-debated cigarette. And these ladies spent their days largely at the baths, the bath being a great establishment with parks and eating places and gay society where one could meet and be met, and play with intrigues. There were huge ones at Rome and Alexandria, and lesser ones in every town that great Rome had absorbed. You may visit a small one, whose pools were lined with red porphyry and whose gardens were girdled with exquisite little buildings at Nimes to this day.

In this world lived Paula, rich, proud of birth, of the upper crust of all the gorgeous, lazy, iniquitous society, mother of four daughters and a son. And her soul loathed

its utter futility. Up on the Aventine Hill she had a friend, rich like herself, the greatest beauty of Rome, now a young widow desired of many men, but Marcella, like Paula, hated it. She too lived in a palace, statued and columned, pooled and gardened, all shut in by the high walls of Italy and served by a great retinue of servants. As days slipped by, Marcella and Paula and a group of their friends, generally youngish women, generally rich and aristocratic women, drew themselves away from the idle world, and spent their time together in that lovely place, talking, praying, and turning their thoughts toward Christ. Instead of silk and gauze, they wore the plainest of robes, and instead of going to feasts, they sat down to simplest tables. Then into this maelstrom of Rome there came one of the most astonishing and dynamic men who ever walked the earth, a Dalmatian priest, brown-clad, with blazing eyes and a tongue of gold and vitriol, with a personality that captured the imagination, and an all-devouring passion of religion. He slashed at the world and the devil and at all who differed from him in doctrine. He set standards and compelled following. And the group on the Aventine became his devotees. No self-discipline was too hard, no ministrations to sick and poor were too exhausting, no theological problem was too subtle for these women who had been born and reared to wealth and ease. They labored and starved by day, and lay on hard ground at night to pray and sob their passion for righteousness. Paula, now a widow, offered up not only herself, but her daughters, though the boy, the youngest of her children, remained for the time a belligerent pagan.

There are perhaps a hundred and fifty letters of St. Jerome still left, some of them long enough to be considered treatises. At first reading one has a sensation of stepping into a great complex world full of people and things and doings as real as today's newspapers and painted in flaming

colors against the crowded life of gorgeous pagan self-indulgence, or of Christian passionate self-discipline, of bishops and deacons, or of ascetics in caves—of surging streets and hushed solitudes. Paula, who might be an intimate friend, stands in the foreground, a friend with whom one sometimes differs, but who never plays one false.

The times had a sex-complex. These letters bristle with it, and all Rome boiled with it. Old Rome had exalted the family and child-bearing as the chief end of women, and here was St. Jerome preaching, preaching with silver tongue and with fiery ardor, virginity, virginity as the truest pathway to eternal bliss. Old Rome had believed in the body and the good things of earth. Jerome and his followers would starve and beat the body and fix the eyes on no beauty nearer than the stars. Pagan husbands raged, for Jerome cried to heaven that marriage was excellent only because it produced virgins. "Celibacy is the life of the angels," said St. Ambrose. And if a woman could not be a virgin, she could be, later, like Paula, a church widow.

Among the group was a dainty little Melania, who lost her husband and two children, tragedy following on tragedy, who lifted her arms and cried, "I am freer to serve Thee, my Lord, since Thou hast liberated me from these earthly ties," who resolved to leave Rome to go to the growing colony of celibates in Egypt for the rest of her life, who, to the horror of Rome, left her only remaining child, saying calmly, "God will take care of him better than I." Then came the death of Blesilla, one of Paula's daughters, self-slain by her vigils and austerities. Rome crowded to see the funeral procession of this girl of great family. The housetops were full of onlookers as the procession passed along the streets and out of the gate to the great family mausoleum on the Appian Way. Paula, following her daughter's body, broke down in a passion of tears and fainted. "See this mother," called some one in

the crowd, "who weeps for the daughter whom she killed by fasting." The mob cried out against Jerome and the monks. Beat them! Throw them into the Tiber! And Paula's grief continued so deep that Jerome wrote her in gentle reproach, "Let us rejoice that Blesilla has passed from darkness to light, while yet in the fervor of her first faith."

Then Eustochium, another daughter, took the vow of chastity, the first maiden of the really illustrious families so to pledge herself. Jerome exulted. Through all his outpouring there runs a certain pride in this achievement, and his letter on virginity to Eustochium is perhaps the most illustrious of his lesser words.

But Rome got hot and uncomfortable. Ugly and utterly untrue scandals about Jerome and Paula were whispered in a dirty-minded city, and finally the two determined to build a city of their own in the Holy Land. There is a long story of their travels, of their visits to that Egyptian desert where after the example of St. Anthony thousands of men and women were living as celibates, clad in skins, sometimes walled into their caves, beating their breasts and disciplining their bodies. Then at last Bethlehem, hushed, fragrant with ecstatic memories, where Paula used her vast wealth to build two huge, austere monasteries for women; where she worked out the details of daily worship and work and discipline; where girls and older women flocked to her away from the sordid and unhappy world into a quiet broken by no passion except that for God. "She would tame the wantonness of the younger girls with frequent and double fasts choosing rather to let their stomachs suffer than their souls." "Let Rome keep its crowds. Let its arena be cruel, its circus go wild, its theater indulge in luxury. Our happiness is to cleave to the Lord." To be sure there were some standards that do not appeal to us. "If she saw one of them too particular about her appearance, she would re-

prove the offender with a contracted brow and sad face, saying that cleanliness of the person and clothing is uncleanness of the soul." Jerome records that Paula "never entered the bath except when she was ill." For this reason, one may be content to love Paula from afar. Holiness was often unwashed. It is told of a certain elderly lady, perhaps Silvia, that when she visited a great colony of religious recluses in Egypt and discovered a sick and feverish deacon who had been tempted by a bath of cooling water, she cried out, "Yield not! Yield not! Look at me. I am in my sixtieth year and water has touched no part of my body even when divers maladies have come upon me, except the tips of my fingers before communion."

Jerome, who began by living in a cave, had, with the help of Paula's money built an institution for men. But the three of them, Jerome, Paula and Eustochium were for years to be deep in a work that was to make him immortal, the translation of the Scriptures into that Latin which, because it was the universal language, understood not only by Rome but by all people for many centuries to come, has been called "*The Vulgate*" and which became the standard text on which our Bible today stands. This was a supreme service to the Christian world, and when people criticized this monk for using women to help him, he exploded with a tribute to Paula's wonderful scholarship. And as for women: "As if these women were not more capable of forming a judgment upon them (the Scriptures) than were men! The good folk who would have me prefer them to you in my estimation, O Paula and Eustochium, know as little of their Bible as they do of Greek and Roman History," said Jerome. "They do not know that Huldah prophesied when men were silent, that Deborah overcame the enemies of Israel when Barak trembled, that Judith and Esther saved the people of God. So much for the Hebrews. As for the Greeks, who does not know that Plato listened

to the discourse of Aspasia, that Sappho held the lyre beside Alcaeus and Pindar, that Themistia was one of the philosophers of Greece? And among ourselves Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, the daughter of Cato and the wife of Brutus, before whom the virtue of the father and the austerity of the husband paled, do we not count them among the glories of Rome? It would take up a whole book to relate all the instances of greatness among women."

Women owe a very tender feeling for Jerome for all his rigorous severities, who said such things about us when some of the fathers were forgetting all women except Eve, and calling women the "gateway of hell" and the source of every evil for mankind.

A defender of faithful women on the whole, Jerome, though he sometimes joined those grumblers and cavillers among the early churchmen, whose memory fixed on Eve rather than on prophetesses and virgin. "Woman should always be clothed in mourning and rags, that the eye may perceive in her only a penitent drowned in tears, and so doing for the sin of having ruined the whole human race. Woman is the gateway of Satan, who broke the seal of the forbidden tree and who first violated divine law."

What were women to think of themselves? Some there were who went on simply living devoted and great lives while men discussed them. Perhaps it was a left-over of the Greeks that remembered that women were mere lapses from normal humanity. "When a woman is born it is a deficit of nature and contrary to her intentions, as is the case when a person is born blind or lame or with any defect, and as we frequently see happens in fruit trees which never ripen. In like manner a woman may be called a fortuitous animal and produced by accident."

That might seem to settle all women for all time. If only anything could settle them!

And one remembers also that other friend of women,

Ambrose, who said a few kind words for us, "The woman has some excuse for her sin. The man has none. It is wrong to accuse women alone of causing the fall. If she fall, ought not the stronger man to have been able to resist and to guard his weaker companion? The fall of man absolves the woman. Also God has willed that through her salvation came into the world." Perhaps Michelangelo had been reading St. Ambrose when he painted Adam bending the apple tree for his wife!

Paula and her kind, defenders of the young church, spenders of all their money and all their devotion for her, were to those men the living demonstrations of womanhood. This is their importance. They were an example of valorous virtue that the world could not ignore.

If Paula kept her girls in order, she imposed on herself asceticisms that outmatched theirs, even when her body grew old and frail. Her vast fortune had been poured out for her monastery and for all the sick and afflicted. She died poorer than poor, leaving even her shroud to be a gift of charity, leaving Jerome to exalt her memory and bewail her loss, leaving a stunned elderly virgin, Eustochium, to fumble blindly for help through the problems of life in a menacing world. And Paula too became a saint, the patron of women of brains and power and self-abnegation.

The terrible Huns were storming the Roman world and had gone as far as Antioch to the terror of this little world of holiness at Bethlehem. Back in Rome, Marcella, once the loveliest and most wooed of young widows, now for thirty years devotee and ascetic, she who had spent her great wealth either on the poor or on the church she loved, saw the sack of Rome by the terrible Alaric and his barbarian hosts. Even more. She was herself beaten and tortured to force her to show where she had hidden the treasures of which, in truth, no more than the tradition remained. What had she to do with money? One sol-

dier, a little more humane than the rest, helped the broken old woman to the church of St. Paul without the Walls, where she died of her tortures.

The little group that used to meet in the palace on the hill was scattered and dead, for there were others than Paula in those later Roman days. Out of the dregs of the infamies of Constantinople up to the throne they came, to pull every political wire. Intrigue and lust and cruelty and murder were their playthings. They used the Church as a tool for party politics and hatred.

I suppose that those exquisite devoted women felt that they were living in the morning of a new order and that Huns and Goths were a passing episode. They could no more believe that Roman dominance and order would be swept away than we can conceive of the wiping out of our civilization. Rome was eternal power. But to the eternal power that was Rome there was now added the eternal love that was Christianity, and all the earth shimmered with a dawning glory.

But, alas! there were not enough Paulas, and the best of them were drawing aside into their silence, and into lives unrelated to the tumult about them. Again they are not so unlike in their attitude to some of our ways of today. One lays down the Jerome letters for a moment and gets to thinking of luxury and sensuality and lawlessness rampant. Plenty of people are left who love and practice decency and religion but somehow fail to see that they bear citizens' responsibilities for making law and order realities, good people's responsibility for making goodness active and not passive; and moreover, making goodness lovable and charming, far more satisfying to ordinary humans than dirt. Yes, there is much about old Rome that sounds modern and familiar.

The modern school of historians tells us that the fall of the Roman Empire came more from economic causes than

from morals; that it was not her sin but her stupidity that brought her down. Nevertheless, economic conditions, trade and finance and labor and distribution of products are not things apart, but are intertwined with standards of thought, of conduct and of ideals.

Chapter VI

WILD TIMES

A CERTAIN instructor in a girls' college broke into the middle of a recitation on mediæval history, "Why do you give your daughters such commonplace names, Sarah and Alice and Dorothy? Think of the loveliness of the very sound of these names we have been talking about! Theudelinda, Amalasuntha, Fredegonda, Hermenigild, Pulcheria. You can't speak them without a thrill!

These were the women who rode on the crest of the stormy waves that were rolling down on old Rome out of the dim forests of northern and eastern Europe. Names of beauty they might have, but they were themselves like flaming banners. Most of them flash into sight for an instant at some crucial moment and then disappear forever in the flood. Some of them twist the history of the world before they vanish. There are such as Hypatia, last flowering of Greek beauty and brains; Galla Placidia, busy builder; Rosamunda, savage with the rapacious conquering army; Theodora, empress and serpent; Clotilda, saint among barbarians.

Rome the Mistress of the World was dead, and the glory of her had been swept away to the city that Constantine, the first of Christian Emperors, had built up out on the Bosphorus and re-named for himself, Constantinople. It was a wily thing, however, to maintain two empires instead of one, and to keep the name of Rome, as head of the Western Empire, still aflame, mostly a lure to barbarian chiefs

who flung themselves on her and won a few moments of glory as little emperors.

As everything had once flowed to Rome, so now everything flowed to the City of Constantine, but there was a difference. Whereas Rome had a backbone, the half Oriental new head of Christendom was weak with dissipation and intrigue. Every form of slimy self-interest and every fashion of display fastened like leeches on the dying Roman Empire. Rival sects, calling themselves Christian, but curiously distorted by superstitions and by vague mysticisms and by deformities of eastern worships that sound more like Baal- than like Jehovah-worship, struggled to get possession of the growing dominion of the newly accepted state religion. Things were done underground and in the dark. Christianity had hardly penetrated the skins of the masses on whom it had been imposed, whether they were old Romans or barbarians out of the woods. These sect-doctrines were the things men fought about, together with power, power from which one after another was pulled down almost as soon as he had seemed to grasp it. And there was hardly anything more important than the circus and the rival factions seething about this entertainment that was all of life to myriads. Small wonder that in such a world the souls that sought decency reacted against the maelstrom of it and left them all behind to go into monkish and ascetic life, exaggerating their asceticism as a protest against the world, the flesh, and the devil. And some brave sons of the church stood fast even in the midst of the turmoil, with the vision of the religion of Christ always before them.

Of the group mentioned above, types of their times, Galla Placidia is the least dramatic, yet because she left more of a monument to herself in architecture than perhaps any other woman, one can hardly forget her. She belongs in a time when the mere record of upheavals is

beyond the memory of most of us. Yet when she found her opportunity, she became a kind of busy human ant, let the wild world do as it would.

Fair daughter she, of Theodosius, emperor who was called "the Great." Ugly and savage tribes grinned and threatened maliciously all around, and Theodosius smote them now here, now there, Goths or Huns, and swallowed their conquered armies into his own forces. But a weak brother sat on the throne at Rome, and Theodosius must go from his own dominion at Constantinople and settle things. Altars and priests of dead paganism still kept up a semblance of life in Rome. They must be broken asunder and cast into flames and Theodosius was the man to do it, over the feeble nominal Emperor of the West, Valentinian. No sacrifices to Jove under tremendous penalties; smash the faces of exquisite marble idols; ruin and contempt for age-old temples. With equal might, Theodosius stamped out Arianism, which threatened to be the predominant form of Christianity both among the newly converted barbarians and among the older converts—Arianism, which proclaimed that, though Christ was the noblest and greatest of all created beings, yet there was a time before the Supreme Maker had called Him into existence. Arianism, therefore, denied the Trinity, the Three eternal and equal. To Theodosius was given to administer the last blow to Arianism as a state religion and to establish Catholic orthodoxy.

All this, and the fury of fighting the heathen and of hating the schismatic was wrought into Placidia. She was never to forget.

Then the fantastic fate of the times began to play with her, battledore and shuttlecock. She was left in Rome, a beautiful girl, a princess, a thing to be coveted and fought for, when Alaric, King of the Visigoths, the first enemy that had swept to the very walls of Rome since Hannibal had been turned back over six hundred years before. Galla

Placidia was part, and no small part, of the plunder when the Visigoths sacked the sacred city; she was bundled off and married to the Ataulphus, who was soon to succeed as king of the Visigoths. (It was a pity Alaric died. He had good qualities. He did not like to murder fellow Christians on Easter Day). And Galla Placidia was battered back and forth like a tennis ball. Sent back to her brother after the death of her first unwanted husband, married again to another little Emperor who enjoyed his supremacy only seven months, little Placidia found herself the mother of a son, who was entitled to the throne when he should grow up. During the time of that growing up, she ruled the Western Empire which was Rome and its vast dependencies, and she ruled it well from the city of Ravenna, a city that was later to hold Dante's tomb and to house Lord Byron, and to be forever associated with Garibaldi. To this day one cannot go to Ravenna without hearing the very rustle of Galla Placida's petticoats. She built and built, and she built gorgeously, and all her buildings are lined with strange Oriental mosaics, stiff figures in Roman garb, in row after row of inexpressive profiles holding arms at angles like Egyptian sculptures. Here in the church of San Giovanni Evangelista, we see the very illustration of the story that St. John had such a high regard for our Placidia that he left his sandal in her hand. And here she built her own immortal tomb, cross-shaped and now sunk five feet into the ground, a church that has the whole of her personality in its famous mosaics; stags quenching their thirst at the holy font, as if the very beasts longed for the stream of life; St. Lawrence roasting on his mosaic gridiron; the Good Shepherd, with some curious lure that makes him forever desirable in spite of stiff arts, just because he was portrayed out of devout faith which made itself master of a crude art that could not match it.

Legend says that our Placidia kept her little son weak-

willed and dissipated so that he should not claim from her the right to rule. Perhaps this is truth. It links her to her time, so pious, so ruthless, so tumultuous.

Ravenna contains two baptistries, one for the Arians and one for Orthodox, remembrances of the ancient discord.

Back in Constantinople lived a people half Roman, half Oriental, mad for pleasure. Circus was the thing. Two great factions divided the city, Blues and Greens. They not only fought for power like political parties, but they fought each other in the streets and in the squares, like modern gangsters, and stabbed each other in the dark. An inconsiderable man, Acacius, a Green, who had charge of the wild beasts used in the great shows, died, and his widow (with another husband already in view) carried his three very small daughters into the arena to beg before the people for help in keeping her husband's office. The Greens jeered. The Blues were kindly, but not in power. But one of the little girls, herself not more than six years old, never forgot the difference between the parties so far as it touched herself. This was Theodora. Very soon she was on the stage, the loveliest, the daintiest, the most alluring and the most insouciant of small actresses. The law required that no one should appear naked on the stage, so Theodora wore a belt. And there was no one about whom her public were so mad. She could appear and puff out her dainty lips so ridiculously that her whole audience screamed with laughter. Do it again! Again loud guffaws. Every gesture set them applauding, she was at once so beautiful and so funny. And no one had such marvelous eyes as Theodora, that could flash any emotion she pleased straight into the heart or the imagination—particularly if it was a dirty imagination—of the onlooker. There was a foul-minded historian living in Constantinople during those days, who rejoiced (as do his like today) in keeping a record of all filthy rumors concerning people of importance. He knew

every obscene resort and every mire-sprinkled person from emperor to beggar. He can tell you how, after her theater successes, Theodora supped with ten young men, supped to excess, and how she became so notorious that any man who treasured his reputation avoided even meeting her on the street. He will add details of disappearances with this or the other lover. And she was an extremely expensive luxury, with a huge appetite for money, fed by her wit and arrogance and her charm.

Meanwhile, a young man of probity and ideals had become the court favorite, and virtually the ruler of the empire through his uncle, the Emperor Justin. Justinian, boy that he was, kept himself abstemious and fasted often as a devotee should. One day, fate took him to the home of Theodora, who had meanwhile decided that vice did not pay, and had taken herself to a small hut and a quiet way of life. Justinian, the great and good, lost himself from that moment; but no patrician could, by law, marry an actress. Justinian bided his time, which came when he became emperor in his own right, and when he bade the lawmakers change the old code. Then he set fair Theodora not only beside him on his throne but even made the reign a joint one, Augustus and Augusta equally powerful. She had been picked up out of the gutter—nay, out of the sewer, to be sure. This Cinderella story has no "virtue triumphant" to it. Nevertheless, from the time when she assumed the title of Empress, Theodora the lady became "good" as that word has been narrowed to meet femininity. "A glorious repentance," so says Gibbon, "was left open to the unhappy females who had prostituted their persons on the theatre, and they were permitted to contract a legal union with the most illustrious of the Romans." For Theodora this meant a diadem. Greedy for money she remained, treasuring old scores and furiously cruel in settling them. But she was not only a faithful wife to the severe young

emperor, but also a clever, brave and wise adviser to him.

Bishops and conquered kings and rulers of provinces and soldiers took the oath of allegiance to Empress Theodora. Too much appearance before the public did not please the new empress. People remembered the comic actress with the funny way of rolling her eyes and the puffed-out cheeks. But the Empress intended to rule.

Theodora, the beautiful, was hidden away in a jewel of a palace with gardens such as only the half tropics could produce, added to wealth outpoured and luxury run riot. In such places—and she had many of them—she spent most of her days, with slaves, eunuchs, favorite ladies. All the arts of the sixth century beauty parlor went to preserving her loveliness. Spies came on quiet feet and were admitted to tell her of this and that intrigue which might mean a sudden disappearance forever of any man whom Theodora considered an enemy. Under the beauty of the upper palace were dungeons and thread-like dark wormholes that led to spots where an enemy might be cast into the sea, or to some judgment chamber of injustice, or to a dark hole where a silence worse than death might swallow him up.

The only son Theodora ever had, the secret of whose birth had been whispered to him by a far-away father who had brought him up, hurried in his young manhood to Constantinople expecting great things. He disappeared, tortured and threatened. The empress would not allow her prestige to submit to natural emotions. Among her best friends was the Antonina, more cruel and more sensual than herself, the wife of the greatest soldier of Justinian's age and among the greatest of all soldiers. It was Theodora who made him humble himself like a whipped dog before the wife who betrayed and befooled him. Fame and honor and patriotism were little things compared with Theodora's favor.

All these dim methods of dealing with foes were at the

disposal of any favorite whom the empress took to her heart. Woe to her agent if he blundered carrying out her will against the highest in the land. "If you fail in the execution of my commands, I swear by him that liveth forever that your skin shall be flayed from your body."

This lady had her opinions and her will even to affairs of the church.

But she was wise. To Justinian, her husband, she was really like her name, "the gift of God." Justinian's name is among the immortals for one great achievement, the gathering and selecting and giving final form to the great laws that Rome, legal genius of the ancient world, had been accumulating through its ages. The Code of Justinian is the source of modern law, not only among the so-called Latin countries, but even as it crept into the common law of our English-speaking world. And the sage Theodora helped in the planning of Justinian's laws. Together the two, emperor and empress, built hospitals, and Theodora herself constructed a huge monastic institution, a palace on the Bosphorus, where five hundred women gathered from the slums of Constantinople were rescued from the life that the empress knew only too well.

The quarrels of Blues and Greens rose to heights unexampled. Streets roared with battle, and great parts of the city were burned. In the games of Ides of January, 532, the Emperor endured tumult up to the twenty-second race. Then he rose: "Be patient and attentive, ye insolent railers!" he cried. "Be mute, ye Jews, Samaritans and Manichaeans!" The Greens cried out that they were poor and persecuted. Out of the crowd such names as "Ass!" "Homicide!" "Perjured tyrant!" were hurled at the indignant monarch. Roaring vituperations and threats passed between emperor and mob. Then came executioners with certain condemned murderers. The rumblings rose to unlicensed tumult. Soldiers and officers were beaten down

and killed. The city was in flames. Women joined in the free fight. Government tumbled and all orderly elements escaped, if they could, across the Bosphorus to the Asiatic side. The emperor himself felt that his doom had come. He gathered boats at his garden landing to escape with what treasure he could lay his hand on. Then came Theodora into the conference. "If flight were the only means of safety," she cried, "yet I should disdain to flv. Death is the condition of our birth; but they who have reigned should never survive the loss of dignity and dominion. I implore heaven that I may never be seen, not a day, without my diadem and purple. Tremble, O Caesar, lest the desire of life should expose you to wretched exile and ignominious death. The Throne is a glorious sepulchre."

The girl of the streets, who made her name first by pulling absurd faces, had gone far before she uttered such words.

But she restored sanity and determination, and the way was found. Cruelty and destruction marked Justinian's return to power, but that was a part of the time. (And one may pause a moment to think of the French Revolution and other wild tumultuous days not so far away. Sixth Century and Constantinople do not seem infinitely removed.)

Justinian and his empress did not always agree, but woe to any one who came between them.

Theodora was not well. Her wild youth, perhaps, had made her frail. Physicians suggested the warm baths of Pythia. "In this journey, the empress was followed by the pretorian praefect, the great treasurer, several counts and patricians and a splendid train of four thousand attendants; the highways were repaired at her approach; a palace was erected for her reception; and as she passed through Bithynia, she distributed liberal alms to the churches, the monasteries, and the hospitals, that they might implore

heaven for the restoration of her health. At length, in the twenty-fourth year of her marriage and the twenty-second of her reign, she was consumed by cancer; and the irreparable loss was deplored by her husband, who, in the room of a theatrical prostitute, might have selected the purest and most noble virgin of the East."

So passed one of the most astonishing of women. One wonders what derision was in her mind as she made that last journey of pomp. The most melodramatic of movies might be made out of her career, and no less from the life of Rosamunda of a barbaric tribe far from the doors of Constantinople.

All the dark forests of Europe were seething with the movements and the adventure and the plunder-hunger of unknown peoples; and to all of them came the whisper of the mighty name of Rome, gold and ivory and marble, awaiting him who could conquer it. One tribe after another moved southward; many of them became Christians by name before they had gone far within the borders of the far-flung empire. Such were the Gepidæ. They were partly civilized. At least they did not count that day lost that had no battle. They set up a certain splendor of their own. And when King Cunimund came to the throne he had a most fair daughter, Rosamunda, coveted by many a warrior.

Meanwhile another race was moving out of the dark north, the Longobardi, longbeards, rough fighters, "fierce beyond even German ferocity," from very near the spots where Anglo-Saxons were to spread out into Britain one of these days.

We have a picture of how they looked. "They made bare the neck, shaving up to the back of the head, having the hair let down from the face as far as the mouth, and parting it on either side of the forehead. But their garments were loose and for the most part of linen such as the Anglo-Saxons were wont to wear, adorned with borders

woven of various colors. Their boots were open almost to the extremity of the great toe and kept together by crossing bootlaces."

Down they pushed toward softer airs and richer plains, fighting and conquering as they came, calling their little chieftains kings, and finally taken into the very dominions of the Roman Empire by Justinian. The son of one of these kings, Alboin by name, magnificent of stature and a born general as well as a free fighter, smote down the son of the Gepid king in a rousing fight wherein the Longobards were greatly uplifted. Might he, a conqueror, now sit at his father's table along with other great warriors? Not so. The ancient custom of his race forbade a king's son to sit at his father's side until he had received his arms from some king of another people. So Alboin, with his party of young men, went boldly to the court of the King Torisind of the Gepidæ, whose son he had killed. Barbarian manners required that he should be received. But he might be insulted; so a prince of the Gepids looked down at the curious white garters that Lombards wore twisted around their legs and sneered, "You are like stinking white-legged mares." Fight was averted by the old king. Saga, song and wassail bowl were resumed. And Alboin returned to his father's court with the arms of the very boy he had killed. He took back more, the memory of the lovely Rosamunda, whom he coveted and was refused.

Soon there was real war again, and this time Alboin, now king himself of the Longobardi, wiped out the whole tribe of Gepidæ so that scarcely one was left to tell the tale. Out of the skull of the Gepid king, Alboin made a cup, set with a gold base, so that, whenever he feasted he might drink deep and remember his glories. In addition he took back Rosamunda. One can imagine how she must have loved this husband who had murdered her people. But silence and submission were her part.

On into Italy swept the tribe. No one could withstand the mighty and wily Alboin. His people adored him as the victorious, the leader under whom plunder came easily. And Rosamunda went too. The tribe was settling down on the fair plains of North Italy, soon to be named Lombardy for them (and some day to produce a Dante and a Florence out of their blood).

Now, under King Alboin they had no hint of coming culture. They "are the anarchists of the folk-wandering time, whose delight is only in destruction." They gathered up other tiny tribes as they swept along and adopted all that was worst in every group, cruelty, treachery, lust. But no one could halt them. Life was a vast orgy of slaughter and drink.

So, at last, King Alboin, seated on his throne in Verona, became very drunk, and in his madness he filled the skull set with gold and pearls, the skull of her father Cunimund, sent it down the table to Queen Rosamunda and bade her drink merrily with her father. Up before the warriors she stood, straight and self-contained, beautiful and obedient to the outward eye. But Alboin had at last passed all limits of insult, and inside his fair queen fury raged. She would stop at no means of revenge, even the implication of herself in a love affair, if she might gain an assassin. So on a day when Alboin went to his noon-tide nap—such things seem to have been necessary to the mightiest warriors if they were also mighty drinkers—his arms were removed from his tent and his sword that lay by his side tied in its sheath. The conspirator crept in and the wakened king found nothing but a footstool to ward off the blows.

"Thus did that most warlike and courageous man, who had earned so great fame in war by the slaughter of multitudes of his foes, fall like a *nithing* in his chamber by the stratagem of a miserable woman." No sympathy for the woman!

But Rosamunda and her lover had to fly from Lombard anger at the murder of so profitable and invincible a leader, and soon Rosamunda began to see new and great honors awaiting her, for the Roman governor, who sat at Ravenna, and under whom Lombards and all newly come settlers were supposed to be, suggested to the lovely lady that he would be a more desirable husband than her co-plotter, Helmechis. To Longinus, "the wicked loveliness" of the princess of the Gepidæ was part of the lure, but added to it was the fact that the Lombards had been sacking and hoarding and pilling up treasures over north Italy. Helmechis was luxuriating in all the barbaric enjoyment of the delicate ways that Romans had invented, and now, after a lazy bath, as he lay in the cooling room, there came Rosamunda with a cup of wine. Hardly had Helmechis drunk his first deep draught when he recognized that he had been poisoned, so standing over her with drawn sword, he made Rosamunda drink the other half of her own potion. Side by side they fell dead.

White-gartered barbarians out of Scandinavia, crude feasts and saga songs, fight and insult and war, plunder and riches and glory, a beautiful woman and a hatred deep as death, and the last dramatic wine drink—what better melodrama could the mind of man invent than the things that were true in the wild times when Rome was dying as an imperial power and when new nations were coming into being? Theodora out of the mud and seated on an ancient throne, Rosamunda out of savagery and working out her own bloody revenge seem like the times incarnate.

But while these two passed and left no lasting trace, there were other kinds of women, the kinds who from the beginning and down through had their way by other feminine qualities.

Farther to the west another mighty barbarian warrior was sweeping out of Germania into the land that was to

cease to be called Gallia and take its name of France from the wild and terrible Franks whom he led. Clovis had had no great following, no silver and gold to tempt followers, but he played the old game of Caesar and saw that whenever his little army gained a battle, each and every one of his men should have a perfectly equitable part of the plunder. He himself took no more than his share. So men flocked to his banner of Salian Franks. And where they went in peace, Clovis saw to it that not so much as a grass field should be disturbed. He was as swift in punishment of disobedience to his laws as he was generous to his men. A good leader to cling to in the wild days, but a pagan, Clovis worshiped still the gods he had brought from the birth land of the Franks in Germany.

At home, during the warring career of her husband, waited the fair Clotilda, daughter of the neighbor prince of Burgundy, by her very docility and meekness making a day by day impression on the wild Franks, a devout Christian among the unruly pagans, a Catholic Christian when the barbarians around were swinging to Arianism. Even on the inflexible Clovis, perhaps half-consciously, an impression was made. At any rate, when there came a battle where the scales hung in the balance against him, the vision of his queen came to his mind, and he cried out that if the God of Clotilda would give him the victory, he would become a Christian with all his followers. A swift turn in the tide of war and a swift turn in the worship of the Franks sealed the bargain. Three thousand barbarians were baptized with their king. Then they set about to find out something concerning this new God they were pledged to serve. "They adored the cross they had burned, and burned the idols they had adored," said Gregory of Tours. Clovis listened to the eloquent bishop of Rheims. (There where he was baptized a thousand years of French kings were to be crowned.) He was stirred by the tale of the

outrages committed upon Clotilda's God. "If I had been present at the head of my valiant Franks," he cried when he learned of the crucifixion, "I would have avenged His injuries." St. Martin of Tours was performing the miracles that have made him beloved over France. The followers of the now Catholic King were flocking to the fonts, but their new devotion did not stay the hand of the King from slaughtering all the princes who might menace his throne and so making sure of his kingly power.

Clotilda had delivered a nation and the future of a mighty power that was soon to be cemented by Charlemagne to the Catholic Church. It was another death wound for Arianism. To vanquish the heretics and to possess their lands and treasures became a glorious duty. And for Clotilda there came sainthood, the sainthood of the influence that works under the surface in the subconsciousness of men. Clovis was the new Constantine, the new Joshua, the new Gideon. France was being born, and Clotilda was its mother.

One must go back a few years to the other woman who was almost as perfect a pagan as Clotilda was a Christian. The world of scholarship had swung away from Rome, away from Constantinople and was centered in Alexandria. Here too wrangled the schismatics of the church and here a great library was growing. Here as though she were a piece of marble come to flesh and blood lived Hypatia, the very last embodiment of Greek beauty, Greek mind, Greek courage, and almost as cold to the world of feminine passion as though she were a living statue. The greatest mathematician of her age in the city of scholars was Hypatia and the daughter of a father only less skilled than herself. Plato was her idol and to the study of his philosophy went her days and nights. But her mathematical mind kept her philosophy from dissolving into clouds. She was rigorous. The great schools of Alexandria called on her

to lecture to them, severely simple in her long Greek robes, austere in her beauty that would accept none of the wooers who were captivated by her classic loveliness, rejecting the Christianity that she saw surrounded by quarrels and involved in the discussion of fine points that seemed to her futile compared with the magnificence of the ancient Athenian search after truth. The rulers of the city and the erudite of the schools flocked to her to discuss questions of politics and questions of learning. Her books became authorities. If all old Greece could have been embodied in one last essence, that would have been Hypatia.

Literati and students thronged the city. Correctness in language, elegance, purity, became Alexandrian. Jewish and Hellenistic and Christian theories were discussed and compared. Among them all, Hypatia shone like a star. The greatest of all ancient museums was added to the greatest of all ancient libraries. Euclid, the father of geometry, was only one of the illustrious names that Alexandria gave to the world. And among the standard contributions to mathematics were those of our Hypatia.

Six hundred years after Christ, the library with its seven hundred thousand books (that were hand-inscribed manuscripts, laboriously copied) was burned by the stupid and ignorant Saracen conquest. Whatever was contrary to the Koran ought to be destroyed. Whatever corresponded to the Koran was not needed since that single book contained all men ought to know. So, together with myriads of priceless writings of Greece and Rome and Palestine and Egypt, all the works of Hypatia were wiped out in flames. Only the reputation and the memory of her remain.

But politics under the cloak of religion hated her. And one day, as her chariot carried her through the streets after her lecture, an ecclesiastic named Peter pulled her from her seat, and the mob behind him dragged her to a near-by church, stripped her chaste body, tore her limb from limb

and hurried the still palpitating fragments of her to a heaped bonfire.

Wild times such as these days, when one civilization was agonizing in death and another was agonizing in birth throes, brought dramatic women into being. There were more of them. Another empress, Eudocia; another barbarian, Theulinda; other Frankish queens; the terrible Fredegonda or the gentle Bertha who carried Christianity with her when she married King Ethelbert in England.

If romance is the story of passion and adventure and vicissitudes, there was never a greater, more fascinating time than the span of years from about two hundred after Christ to about six hundred. History itself seemed to be screaming from the housetops—and the house was on fire.

Chapter VII

THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL FOR WOMEN

Playing with the Middle Ages is much like disporting around a cyclone. Everything is going in every direction. The thing one says of this place is not true of that, and the thing one says of this day has changed its face tomorrow. This is a chapter of straws and hints.

This long, long stretch of time from the fall of Rome to the dawn of the Renaissance was the period when all the parts that have gone into the making of the world as we know it today were settling themselves and gathering themselves into form. All kinds of conflicting ways were fighting it out. Christianity had conquered the legal-minded ancient civilizations of Rome and Greece. It had also conquered the wild Teuton and Slav. Conquered? How much did that mean? Who thinks that the two thousand Saxons given their choice between baptism and death by Charlemagne were in an instant swung out of paganism to become new and better men? That kind of change in nominal allegiance was going on all over Europe and for many, many years. Old gods and old customs kept along with new obeisance before the cross, and even forgot that they were pagan in origin when they held side by side with simple Christianity. Just so, we do not remember that we use the name of a northland goddess, Easter, to signify the day of days. The names of four of the days of our week are Norse. A hundred pet superstitions and a thousand habits commemorate our barbarian ancestors in our every day. Not from Christian source do we get the idea

that we must knock on wood lest some envious deity hear of our good fortune and promptly put an end to it; that it is unlucky to break a mirror because that destroys our image and therefore brings misfortune to ourselves. Even the hesitation at sitting down at table with thirteen, a recollection of the Last Supper, is twisted by superstition from its merely historical place at the urge of some irrationalism deep in our subconscious belief in omens.

Marriage customs tell us quite a story. The thrown shoe (it must be an old shoe) is of the time when brides were stolen and so the wedding of today must keep up a semblance of battle and make a hideous uproar when the young couple departs; the rice for a later-developed good will and a wish for fertility; the veil for the change from a hidden maidenhood to a more public matronhood; the cake for the bread that once symbolized the common table of husband and wife; the "obey" for the time when a girl was handed from a master father to a new master husband; the "Who giveth this woman?" to make sure that the old possessor was giving legal title to the new. And so it goes. Free women like free men wore long hair, and an unmarried girl must keep hers flowing. If the day of her untrammelled locks lasted too long she might wish to hide her disgrace of singleness in a nunnery. When she became a wife, and so belonged to a man, she plaited her hair. Until the day of the bob, we kept this custom of having a girl child wear her hair down and a wife, or at least a grown woman "put her hair up".

The Middle Ages joined and fought out old traditions and fresh: Barbarian, Roman, Christian. Neither the Barbarian nor the Roman involved uniformity, for they were made up of many usages of many tribes that had overlaid and mingled in the migrations and conquests. Even the struggle of the Church to establish its dominion upon the main events of life—birth, marriage, death—was here

feeble, there strong; here quite sure of its object, there still under the influence of the peoples who had lately come into the church and were more familiar with their old prejudices than with the Christ.

But in the main, woman was property. She was used to cement family or political alliances, being given to this man or that. She had a money value, like other possessions, and could bring her owner profit. Such laws as that of Ethelbert might be found in many places.

"If a man carry off a maid by force, let him pay fifty shillings to her owner and afterwards buy her from him."

"If a man carry off a freeman's wife, let him procure him another with his own money, and deliver her to him."

The Exeter Book suggests a higher stage, for as society grew more civilized the chief change so far as women were concerned was the stipulation that the maid should be bought by straight bargaining and not captured first and paid for afterward. Why waste energy and perhaps life?

"A king shall with cattle
Buy a queen;
With cups and bracelets
Both shall at first
In gifts be bounteous."

Perhaps the father took the shoe off the girl, and handed it to her new lord, probably to signify that from now on his foot was on her neck. (It was a great joke, if a woman was suspected of being a domineering young person, for the shoe that lay on the husband's side of the bed to be slyly stolen and tucked over on her side.) Even that was not so dire in its suggestion as the usage of that tribe where the father handed the bridegroom a whip and the small maid who was being presented to her new lord and master was obliged to drink a cup of wormwood tea, both of these

to rub into her just how much pleasure she might expect in this matrimony into which she was entering.

"Hand-fasting" or clasping of hands and the payment of the price in the presence of relatives were enough of a ceremony in good old days. And if there had been underhand dealings on the part of the father of the bride, the law declared that a discontented husband might bring back the bad bargain.

> "But if there be deceit,
> Let him bring her home again,
> And let man give him back his money."

The clergy steadily lessened the power of husband and father, and exalted the power of the church. Church law grew stronger. Marriage became a church ceremony instead of a mere business transaction. The giving of a ring and a kiss signalized the new formalities.

Three forms of law signified the three elements mentioned above. Common Law was the formulation of ancient customs; Roman Law was the inheritance from that civilization that conquered barbarian tribes even while they conquered it. Canon Law was of the church. And since the church contained almost all the learning and order of the dark centuries, its steady push toward control of life gained ground day by day. It made for certain decencies, and decencies have always helped women.

The fight of the Church was against polygamy or against the marriage of a new-made lord with his father's widow, if that widow was not his own mother, or against the compelling of a maid to accept a husband whom she hated. The church might well bestow some personal recognition on women, for all over Europe women were among the most potent agencies in spreading Christianity. Somehow, in their weakness, they gained prestige and influence over their

warlike lords. Bertha of France made her husband, King Ethelbert, the first Christian king of Kent; Ethelburga brought Northumbria into the fold. Edith, the daughter of Earl Godwin and wife of Edward the Confessor, was distinguished for learning and beauty and piety. Godiva, the heroine of Coventry, belongs in this company.

And very soon bishops began to interfere with the ancient right of a husband to put away a wife on any whim that pleased him. The church claimed the right not only of making a marriage legal but also of perpetuating it. But it was a thousand years after Christ before the girl-child obtained any right to object to the selling or the giving of her body to whomever her father pleased. Then a man could no longer marry his daughter against her will. He must confine himself to beating her and imprisoning her and keeping her half-starved unless she consented!

It became a custom, borrowed from old times, to give a bride a gift on the morning after marriage, no trifle, but shield and spear to show how she was to share responsibility. If the lady bride proved very alluring, perchance that "morning gift" expanded into great lands and estates which from that time on were hers and to be disposed of at her will. Otho, Emperor, gave King Athelstan's sister Eadgith (Edith), the city of Magdeburg because he liked her very well.

When the Danes came to power in England a husband must by law give his wife custody of the keys of all the strong places of his house. Then, if he stole, unless the stolen stuff was found locked in those rooms of which she had the custody she was not guilty with him and no longer could she and her children be sold into slavery for her husband's evil deed. Thus said King Knut.

Women were given protection. Said the Salic law, if a man squeezed a freewoman below the elbow, he must pay twelve hundred denarii—of course to her owner; if above

the elbow, fourteen hundred; if on the breast, eighteen hundred.

Women were the home manufacturers. "The distaff" was the symbol of womanhood, as the spear was of manhood. No trouble about deciding what was woman's rightful sphere in those days. The processes of making cloth and shaping it into garments had not been taken away from home and put into factories where no one could tell to which sex they belonged. English women, way back at the time of the Norman Conquest, "excel all others in needlework and in the art of embroidering in gold." When the lady was a princess or a queen, she was just as diligent a worker, but she might fashion gems into the work of her hands and make a garment splendid with pictures, men and dragons perhaps, or spectacular battles. And the ladies loved brilliant colors, purple for robes and probably blue for the hair! Churchmen reproached them for thus blemishing the colors that God had given to the humble wool.

The story of the laws that held woman down or helped her up (not more than a step at a time and that at long intervals) is a whole history to itself. While canon law helped women to become souls and not things; while it stabilized marriage rights and forbade divorce; while it crushed down polygamy (but often in its precarious balance between weakness and strength had to wink at doings by powerful lord and potentate that were forbidden by its principles) yet it too was influenced by its time. Women were daughters of Eve—poor old eternal Eve! They were inferior in mind and in destiny. Shakespeare's plaint in the mouth of Constance represents the bare truth that every woman had to face in the upheavals of her day.

"I am sick and capable of fears;
Oppressed with wrongs, and therefore full of fears,

A widow, husbandless, subject to fears;
A woman, naturally born to fears."

And during all those centuries, law was crystallizing, crystallizing so hard and so backed by the habits of mind and the habits of society that it was going to take revolutionary upheavals to change law and custom and the relations of men and women, centuries later, when it began to be seen that the basis of human society and the foundation of government did not lie on brute strength.

But the thing so important about this era is this, so important that one wishes it could be put in capitals: While brutal and inhuman laws about women were becoming hardened, those laws that have almost cast women out from the human race by linking every woman with the insane and criminal for generation after generation, the very opposite of this brutishness was also getting its roots planted, that frail ineffectual idealism about women that, in the long run, was to prove stronger than the chains. The chivalry of the Middle Ages was tinsel, and the chivalry of many centuries to come was not much better. It was all talk and emotion. Many hundreds of years were to pass before the kind of reverence for women that permitted them to be real people was to be embodied in custom and law. And still the time is not wholly ripe.

Courts of Love and The Divine Comedy were germinating below the surface. And the growing processes were helped by the churchly women who had a kind of freedom of the spirit and body which were not granted to the married woman. There are plenty of loathsome stories linked with the church of this time. Calling themselves Christians did not change the doings of many a man and woman, savage or lustful or slyly seeking the protection of the sanctuary for hidden evil deeds. "Christianity has never been tried," said a wise man. The Middle Ages

were even deeper in the mire than the ages that went before them or those that followed them. That was part of the times. There are dark stories in the Bible. They are not the essential part of the book, but the revelation of still undeveloped human beings. So with this story of dark and middle times. There is also enough of delightful life, and life moving forward, to fill our minds. Let the rest go. Women were wallowing through mire, and keeping some parts of themselves clean.

Meanwhile, even in the darkest days, women were playing a part above the law. There is tenderness even in the names men gave their daughters. Godiva, "the gift of God"; Edith, "the gift of happiness"; Elfthrida, "the strength of elves"; Elfgiva, "the gift of fairies or spirits"; Ethelburga, "the fortress of nobility."

And there was the Convent. The convent was a spot of silence in a roaring cruel world. It stretched out its arms, the arms of the invincible church, offering protection and quiet to the hunted woman to whom security of body meant more than the world, the flesh, and the devil. Discount the tales of flesh and devil that she found; the residue is sufficient. And remember, marriage was not often an affair of love but still a form of slavery. There were women of brains, too, who coveted a life of the intellect. The convent offered the only spot where they could find training. There were weary women who had been the playthings of fate, torn creatures. The convent was the place to which to creep for gathering their souls together before death—the place to measure and rectify the mistakes of life. There were ambitious women who would not accept the subjection of marriage but chose to be independent. As a matter of fact, these great positions in the church were frequently the chosen field for princesses who preferred independence and a career rather than to be political pawns, bartered in their childhood, and buffeted

by all the tumultuous fortunes of a turbulent period as were their married sisters who, on their part, after enduring all the seesaw of life and tragedy that the Middle Ages could inflict, were usually only too glad at last to knock at the abbey door and find security after peril, peace after the storm. For such independent women, there was the noble freedom of the high places in the church where no man's caprice might master them, but where they became great church ladies as men were great church men. Order and purpose and self-reliance and, most of all, the consciousness of the spiritual meaning of life came to women in convent and abbey walls.

So there is the story of the women of the Church. Moreover, while the great ladies of the church could always fall back on their sanctuaries, they were not always out of the currents of public affairs. The woman of the church was not necessarily a recluse. Abbesses sometimes "held" of their kings just as barons did and were obliged to supply a certain number of men of war and certain sums of money in time of stress. They administered their little principalities. At least in early days they might be resplendent as to clothes, for here is the description of the dress of an important nun from Edhelm in the eighth century: "A vest of fine linen of a violet color is worn, above it a scarlet tunic with a hood, sleeves striped with silk and trimmed with fur, the locks on the forehead and the temple are curled with a crisping iron, the dark veil is given up for white and colored head dresses, which, with bows of ribbon sewn on, reach down to the ground; the nails, like those of a falcon or sparrow hawk, are pared to resemble talons."

As clerical affairs became more orderly, the garments of their order subsided to plainer and simpler habits. By 1391, we find such orders as these; that nuns shall not henceforth "wear silken clothes and especially silver veils nor precious furs nor rings on their fingers nor tunics laced up

nor any robes called in English 'gowns' after the fashion of secular women."

A splendid story is that of the church ladies, full of color and adventure and tragedy and holiness. There is Hilda of Whitby on the hill above the sea, who had made her establishment of both men and women a well-ordered one before she ventured to build the great abbey whose broken walls look down today over the wide waters of the north, where, in her times monk and nun obeyed her rule, to which kings and bishops came to consult her wisdom, where a great church conclave was held, and where Caedmon—first of English poets—found his refuge before he died. Five men who studied at Whitby afterward became bishops.

There is Radegunda of Poictiers, queen as well as abbess. A hard task was hers, to bring the somewhat naughty nuns to disciplined ways. There had been a time when they chased masculine clergy into headlong flight across the river rather than submit to orders.

In fact, one could put fingers down here and there all over the Europe that was coming into being and find these princesses of the church.

There has never been a great abundance of saints upon earth, but if ever a time had need of saints it was the Middle Ages. The story of Genevieve, pale little maiden, strong in faith, through many adventures on to her old age, Genevieve whose prayers saved Paris from the burning and raping and killing Hun, is told on the walls of the Pantheon in Paris today in the pastel delicacy of Puvis de Chavannes, and under the Pantheon are supposed to lie the bones of St. Genevieve, the patron saint of Paris; down in Italy St. Catherine of Siena has left the impression of her steadfast personality on that town as surely as St. Francis left his at near-by Assisi; out in Hungary was St. Elizabeth who made even a lie such a glorious thing

that a miracle changed it to the truth, and transformed the bread that she was carrying to the poor against orders into roses inside her robe.

None of the church ladies is dearer than the "swan of Gandersheim," an old abbey of Saxony, founded and endowed by a great Count and administered by the ladies of his family until it drew to itself numbers of other noble women who not only led lives of sanctity, but made their big establishment a refuge for the sick and poor and a training place for young girls. Here, in the tenth century, lived and wrote Hrotsvita, "the swan." One sees her dainty to the point of primness, simple and yet extraordinarily wise as to the ways of a wicked world. Gandersheim had a notable library in the days when a book was a book, each made by loving, painstaking hands, and not turned out by the thousand. Roman classics and Christian saints and German legends were there to Hrotsvita's hands. She became the first dramatic author of western Europe and her funny old plays have lasted to this day.

We consider that the object of all normal drama is to see the hero and heroine successfully married off or at least with the prospect of marriage in the last act. The little nun to whom chastity was the highest achievement in human life has no such idea in her plays. Her purpose was to keep the hero and heroine from getting married, and devote them to the church. So we have the great Roman general Gallicanus induced by Constantine to go out and fight the Scythians with the promise of being rewarded by the hand of his daughter. But Constantia had vowed herself to chastity. She could not, of course, pray for the defeat of her father's and lover's army but she could pray that somehow the way would be found for her; so it happens that in the tumult of a tremendously difficult campaign, Gallicanus sees the light himself, becomes a Christian and pledges himself on his victory to enter a monas-

tery, and Constantia is saved from the tragedy of matrimony. Another play deals with a very bad Dulcitius, the custodian of three beautiful Christian maidens on whom every pressure is brought to bear to forsake their faith, but who are finally doomed to martyrdom in the arena. Dulcitius determines to make love to his three helpless charges but on their prayers he is so deluded that he mistakes the kitchen pots and pans for the three girls and they watch from behind the doors with gurgles of pious laughter while he throws his arms around the sooty vessels, and besmears himself with their dirt.

"Very fitting that he should be so in body since the devil has possession of his mind."

The most dramatic and actable of Hrotsvita's plays is "Abraham," the story of a fallen woman who comes to herself and is redeemed by a desert anchorite so that the play ends with the joyous singing of the angels who have been watching the contest in her soul.

Also, way back in the eighth century, there is a group of ladies of the church who idolized a great and noble gentleman of the church. Real nuns, they, not politically minded, but alive to the question of the spirit. Winfred, or Wynifrith, whose name means "the peace of joy," a young priest at Exeter, became, when he went to Rome, *Boniface*, and became also by his chosen destiny "apostle to the Germans," gentle in spirit but fiery in religious passion, though his zeal showed itself not like Charlemagne's, who would decapitate the enemies of Christ. Boniface chose to cut down a sacred oak of the pagans and so to show them that their old God had no power to avenge himself—a poor, futile creature against the axe of the priest. The day came when he was to become a martyr to pagan frenzy and finally to be listed among the saints. But during the days of his missionary zeal, he numbered these English ladies of the church among his correspond-

ents. With a stylus, they wrote him in their quaint Latin, the language of scholarship, and they sent him gifts of money to assist him in his work, and vestments made by their own hands. Sometimes in return he or his friends presented frankincense or pepper or cinnamon.

Old world letters they are, charming and naïve and the expression of a sweet and sanctified friendship, between men and women. "Unworthy Cene," one writes, "salutes her revered lover in Christ, Bishop Boniface. Now I confess to thee, much loved, since it is permitted me rarely to look upon thee with my bodily eyes, that nevertheless I cease not to regard thee continually with the spiritual eyes of the heart. And the small presents sent herewith are rather intended as tokens of love than as worthy of thy holiness. And this I make known to thee, that until the end of my life I always remember thee in my prayers. And I beseech thee by our pledged friendship that thou be faithful to my littleness, for my trust is in thee; and that thou help me in thy prayers, that God Almighty may dispose of my life according to His will. And I beg that if ever any one of yours come to this province that he may call upon my poverty; and that if in any thing either of carnal utility or of spiritual aid I can be of assistance either to thee or to any of thine, that he inform me of it. Farewell ever in the Lord."

Later there arose from among women a defender of her own sex. Christina de Pisan was, so far as we know, the first woman to earn her living by her pen, and it is perhaps significant that she was like many a latter-day woman, forced into the world by the hunger of the six dependents who hung on the skirts of this little widow at the court of France. Her name leaped into fame and she became a celebrity. Some copies of her work lie in museums to this day, and there is a lovely illumined picture of Christina on her knees before Isabella, queen of Bavaria, offer-

ing her volume. In the quaint old illumination she kneels in her blue robe and in her two-horned headdress, to present to the Queen her defense of womanhood against the aspersions of man-made verses. The *Romance of the Rose* was the great popular poem of the day. Every one read it, or if he could not read, as he probably could not, he had a mere "clerk," one who dabbled in the lower interests of the mind instead of the high occupations of hunting and fighting, read it to him. The Romance was as dirty a thing as was ever written about women. Not one of them was chaste. Love, intrigue and seduction were its themes, all veiled in the language of chivalry and symbolism that the Middle Ages loved. Probably the Romance was no bad interpreter of much of its time. But here was Christina de Pisan coming to the rescue of her sex. She knew them better than any man and she knew multitudes of them pure, even to heroism. So here she kneels. The queen is gorgeous in scarlet and gold and ermine; court ladies are crowned with immense rolled headgear. The walls are hung with blue tapestries, gold embroidered; little white dogs crouch on the floor and the book is bound in red velvet bossed with gold.

Christina has another distinction. She became a champion in writing of peace. *The Weeping Request of Loyal Frenchmen*, addressed to the queen of Charles VI, pled for settlement of the contemptible and ambitious rows of the day without recourse to the sword that was destroying thousands of fighters and making beggars of myriads of poor peasants to whom the victory of either party could make not the slightest possible difference. When she was an old woman and had refused the invitations of kings and potentates to take up her residence in Italy or England, she became one of the women who crept, late and weary, to the Convent. Once this woman of the cloister crawled out of her quiet years to burst for a last time into the

world of politics by a glorification in verse of the greatest woman of her time and one of the greatest of all time, the maid Joan of Arc.

A new thing, a marvel in the world was the Maid. If Eleanor of Aquitaine may be reckoned the embodiment of the glitter of the Middle Ages, Joan is the embodiment of its spirit and its tragedy. In simple faith that permeated her until it became a vision and made martyrdom more natural than living, she is not strange except as any supreme human being is strange. All her time and all womanhood was in her. The lady of the court, Christina, saw her with clear eyes. For the wonder was that the Maid was come up into the world of the great from the world of the despised. Romance and Chivalry had hitherto belonged to the nobly born. Only the "gentle" were supposed to be capable of high emotions and exalted bravery. Joan showed the whole world of the Middle Ages the greatness of the abject. She was a knight. None braver sat a horse and carried a spear. She was a peasant. She was a saint. She was a woman. A strange and even impossible combination this. But one of the accusations that brought her to her death, parallel in infamy to witchcraft, was the fact that she wore the clothes of a man when she went into battle! Times do change.

As for the powerful ladies of the church: for several hundred years there was one abbey of France that was presided over by imposing ladies, many of them of royal blood, who dipped their powerful fingers into every political quarrel of the day. Nowadays, in the old abbey of Fontevrault, the yellow light streams down between tall solemn columns to fall upon four tombs still bearing the effigies of Eleanor of Aquitaine, Henry the Second of England, her husband, of Richard of the Lion Heart, her son, and of Isabella of Angouleme, her tragic faithful daughter-in-law.

The next time you go to France, it will be worth your

while to make a little detour to visit this same ancient and lovely Fontevrault, not too far from Orléans and Tours, filled with traditions of those great women of the Middle Ages, the women of the church. It lies there silent in the sunshine. There is still the lovely cloister, arch on arch surrounding the square garden, and off at one side the curious enormous kitchen with its roof like a beehive covered with protuberances, and on the other side ranks of offices and cells which the French Government now uses as a prison but which in those days of Eleanor and Richard housed three thousand monks and nuns gathered from the aristocracy. A lady abbess ruled both sexes, and the abbesses were often royal princesses.

Occasionally powers in high places used the convents as prisons where they could force objectionable women out of sight. For example, when the evil queen, Eadborga, who had poisoned her husband and his favorite courtier, was driven out of England, she took refuge with Charlemagne. Charlemagne, in turn, convinced that she was a wicked and dangerous woman to leave at large, made her tht abbess of a rich monastery until even that flung her out and she fled to die in Italy.

One of the supreme love stories of history belongs in this time; not a dream story, like Dante's, but a story of flesh and blood. For, the idol of his scholastic time, Abelard, came to Paris. No one could command such vast enthusiastic audiences of students as he. No one was so subtle and so scholarly in discussing ancient points of theology concerning which the world has long since grown indifferent. And he was handsome and tall and charming. His lecture position at Notre Dame was like a throne. For twenty years he had stood on his pedestal. To his curious ears there came the humor of a marvelous maiden, the niece of another canon of Notre Dame, and, rather bored perhaps by his own glories, he determined to make the ac-

quaintance of this feminine marvel of learning, sixteen years old, and talked about all over France. He soon found himself the teacher and intimate and adorer of Heloise, as she adored him. Poor old uncle did not realize what he was doing when he trusted to Abelard's reputation for inflexible morality and devotion to scholarship alone. "He gave the lamb to me, a wolf," Abelard wrote long afterward. The child, for she was hardly more, was awed by his reputation, captivated by his beauty, bewitched. The master theologian began to write songs, and forgot all prudence. All day and many days they read together. Heloise was utterly pure and utterly ignorant and only knew that she loved. He knew every thing but chose to forget. After a long hidden ecstasy, came the crash, when Uncle Fulbert discovered the truth. Then a secret marriage, to which, with true mediaeval chivalry, Abelard referred many years later: "The greatest men have been overthrown by women." But the secrecy of the marriage was not enough to satisfy this lover, who wanted success as well as love. For him there was but one pathway to exaltation—the church. Heloise came to see it. She could not stand in the way of the man she loved better than herself; so she gave him up forever by taking the veil herself in the little chapel of Argenteuil, breaking down in sobs, and crying out words from the old pagan Lucian, "Accept the penalty! I will endure it gladly." Heloise never pretended that she loved anything in heaven or earth as she did Abelard. She paid the supreme sacrifice of what was to her death in life for the sake of his career. Passion-torn or not, Abelard was willing to have her do it. One is more or less gratified to know that from this time on, the appearance of the philosopher in public no longer produced an excitement like a royal progress. In fact, his career stopped short. He became stigmatized as a heretic. He wandered, poor, in empty places. Once,

after ten years of silence between them he appeared, to help his abbess wife in founding a nunnery which he called "The Paraclete." A long life she lived, and a devout one, holding herself to the duties of her forced widowhood. And a long life he lived, an ineffectual one, that poured out in writing the story of this illustrious love of theirs. Poets and romancers have dipped into it ever since. But its real hero is Heloise, the woman, and not the egoist and seeker after glory, Abelard.

Chapter VIII

ELEANOR THE TUMULTUOUS

All the world of Europe was in whirl after Rome fell. Words that have come to have a fixed meaning to us meant to that time only flux—words like King, State, even Church. To be a king was to maintain a constant fight for power and authority among nobles sometimes as wealthy and powerful as their lord, nobles insolent and always on the alert to overthrow him. To be a lord or a lordling was one long vigilant effort to keep one's balance. Walls behind which to hide and slots through which to shoot arrows or roll down stones were the first requisite for dominion. So castles grew for nobles and walled towns for traders. Whatever else life contained, it was chiefly fight. And woe to the weak, whether he be peasant or she be woman.

Imagine how deadly monotonous the days must have been inside of castle walls, when the same small circle was pressed together day after day, unpolished, unlettered, unresourceful people. Even eating and drinking, which were mostly gobbling and guzzling, were not enough to fill the days. Normal humans demand variety. Something had to be done about it, and the something that was done became of infinite import to women.

Adventure and danger lay outside the walls, and so out went the lord whose only idea of life was fight and plunder. Inside stayed his lady, not much more than his vassal by law, but after all, in his home his representative and his equal in birth. If he was a man of some puissance,

then his vassals were eager to send their sons to grow up under his ægis. The walls must grow larger and there must be room for more than a mere tower of defense. There must be a courtyard for knightly exercise, and soon, a garden and a play space, all made safe by ramparts. Ladies used their leisure for needlework and their fancy for decoration. Clothes became splendid with color and design—so splendid that kings and churchmen began to think they ought to be restricted, and Philip le Bel issued an edict that no lady of a duke or earl or baron should have more than four new dresses a year, no wife of a knight more than two and no mere damoiselle more than one. But when ever did sumptuary laws work?

The castle was a small world, a city to itself, and often for long periods while her lord was absent, the lady was its ruler, and under feminine rule, society came into existence. What should they do with the hours? Games of skill and games of chance were invented. Boys and girls —damoiseaux and damoiselles—played together. Thin little musical instruments accompanied thin little songs, and more and more the songs sang of love, and the excellent singer became a person to welcome to hall and garden. "Romans" they called the stories that were passed about from ancient records, but these same stories changed their character and grew adventurous and filled with the new ideas of love. So came the word *Romance*. Love and the service of ladies was the foundation of all excellence. The reverence and veneration and exaltation of the Virgin had a human shadow that surrounded all women—at least all women of noble birth. (Common people still did not count in the reckoning of human values.) Every beautiful lady was surrounded by a certain mystic excellence. She was to be adored by men—if the man did not happen to be her husband. Marriage was still a "mere affair of political or personal interest."

"Society" was being born. It is from this time on that the tradition grew up that every story must be a love story, an idea that would sadly have perplexed our friends of Rome or Greece. That assumption still dominates the theater and the novel.

The court got up at sunrise and went to bed at eight or nine. Why stay up into dim smoky nights of tiny lights? Dinner came in the middle of the forenoon. The lady and her damoiselles gave the morning to work, and played in the afternoons. First, they must make everything that was needful for life, and fill their storerooms with foods and fabrics. Maidens, or "spinsters," must be skilled with distaff and loom and needle. Then chess or dance. Of all things that court ladies went mad about, hawking came first, and in old illuminated manuscripts, when you do not see ladies of blood seated demurely with downcast eyes and hands crossed in their laps, you may find them with falcons fastened to their gloved hands, ready to go out for sport. Courtesy, the way of the court, was "the same thing as nobility of manner," and chivalry turned the coward to a hero.

Here might the game of war be played in tournaments under ladies' eyes, and ladies be the judges of valor and skill.

> "Ladies, now you may look at them.
> You ought to give them for encouragement
> Sleeves and needlecases and laces,
> Promise them the delicious kisses."

There are charming old pictures of successful knights climbing the high towers where ladies sat, to receive the rose crown or the kiss that was the meed of the victor.

Brutal and selfish and ruthless was the actual life that all this fantasy of life surrounded. The dream of romance was a diaphanous garment for reality. The body inside

was unspeakably coarse and vulgar. Even while love and chivalry were being shouted abroad as the fountain source of glory, never were more vile things said of women.

"You all are, will be, or have been
Unchaste in fact or in will"

was a chosen quotation from the most popular romance of the Middle Ages, the "*Romance of the Rose.*"

Out of such a time, whom may one choose to reveal its character? She must be a great lady, for the woman of low birth commanded no more respect than a dog—less than the dog of today. The great game of man with man was the fight. The great game of the man with woman was to toss her into a fine upper ether, if she was beautiful and aristocratic of birth; to throw her into the mire if she was lower than himself. Love was a new play.

When William the Conqueror would wed, he needed a noble lady. But he was William the Bastard. What great dame would have him? Matilda of Flanders despised and flouted him. So he knocked her down and beat her. She respected a strong arm even more than noble birth, and she became a devoted wife who stood by during the doubtful and bloody days while he was seating himself on the throne of England, kept Normandy in order behind his back, saw that he had ships and men, was crowned with him at Westminster and wove the record of his greatness and his glory into that Bayeux tapestry where all his victories are strung out in picture in the most famous piece of weaving in existence. William the Bastard was forgotten in William the Conqueror.

But of all the women of the Middle Ages, Queen Eleanor seems the most fascinating as well as the most typical.

One may number worldlings among one's friends, and

when the worldling happens to be so gay, so beautiful, so puissant, so greedy for power and emotion as Eleanor of Aquitaine, she may almost rank as the most colorful of them all. It was something of a career to be the greatest heiress in the Europe of her day, to be fifteen years queen of France and fifty years queen of England. One may turn the spotlight on her in Paris or Palestine or London. Yet another picture is even more characteristic.

On a May day, under a great elm, she sits on a throne either in a fair meadow or in one of those gardens that the Middle Ages loved, well-walled for safety's sake, intimate, with formal flower beds and fountains, an immense relief from the grim castle that frowned near at hand for a swift refuge. Put yourself back into the days when castles were not mere ornaments of the landscape, but when physical safety was the first thing to look out for, whether you were a peasant who had found him a hidden cave or a prince who had built him a thick wall. In Eleanor's time, they were rapidly developing what the Feudal age might have called modern conveniences in castles. The one way street meant that there was only a single entrance to your fortress home, and that by a drawbridge, kept hauled up most of the time over a moat. Inside the walls, there was a well-equipped torture chamber, with a huge fire ready to heat the iron rod; there was an oubliette, a forgotten spot, perhaps right under the big dining-hall, where you might drop your enemy's wife and children into darkness and starvation; there might be a cramped little barred cell in sight of the hall itself, where a chosen foe, hungry and gaunt, lent pleasant color to your own abundant feast; and always narrow slits for shooting arrows at an undesired guest or for rolling down big balls of stone at such an angle that they careened with tremendous force among his horses.

And so, with a sense of release, back to our garden, itself

in one of the paradises of the world, that portion of southwestern France that the Romans had called Aquitania because it was the land of many waters. Here Eleanor sat enthroned, absorbed in the most thrilling game that had yet been invented. This was a Court of Love, and she was its sovereign lady. She was dressed in scarlet and blue, with loose sleeves lined with fur, and her flowing robe was of the new silk fabric, either sendal or samite, and brilliant with embroidery of gold and silver. Gathered at her feet were her court ladies almost as resplendent as their Queen, and her equally many-colored troubadours and princes and knights.

A new thing had blossomed into the world, a love that meant delight and song and laughter, a thing as light and as iridescent as a soap bubble, but, while it endured, a fascinating experience, particularly as it had to contend with the coarseness and cruelty and lawlessness of its time. Two entirely new words appeared in its company, *courtesy*, and *chivalry*. It had its court attendants, knights and noble ladies. It lived in the Kingdom of Romance. Nor was this kingdom a mere figure of speech. The dominion of Romance had its code of laws and its rules of procedure. When the lover chose his lady and she accepted him, he went through a public ceremony like that by which a feudal lordling put himself in the hands of his liege. On his knees before her, with his two hands joined between her hands and in the presence of witnesses, he swore to serve her faithfully to his death, to defend her against all assailants and to devote himself wholly to her. In return she promised him her tenderest affections, gave him a ring, and raised him to his feet. Henceforth, he wore her "favor," sleeve or chemise perhaps, in tournament where knights contended, and the victor was crowned with a garland and rewarded by a kiss. There were stages of love. The first was that of hesitating; the second was that of

supplicating; the third was that of being listened to; the fourth was that of the accepted lover. And there were rules. "Every lover is accustomed to turn pale at the sight of his lover, and, when this vision is sudden, his heart trembles." "Every act of a lover ends in thinking of his fellow lover."

All this had nothing to do with marriage. In fact, it was the very antithesis of marriage. Marriages were made for political or personal reasons. They involved hard, every-day sordid disillusioning commonplaces. Love was a delicate bit of play that spurned the earth. So much was this true that one of the laws that was promulgated by Eleanor's Court, was "Love can not exist between husband and wife." But laws are sometimes broken. Hence this august session of the Court of Love at which we are looking on, where Eleanor is judge and her knights and ladies advisors. Here is the case. A certain knight fell in love with a fair lady, who on her part had pledged herself to another lover, but in order to let Sir Unsuccessful down easily, she told him that if she ever lost the love of her beloved, she would accept him, No. 2, for her lover. She married her beloved. And now No. 2 was suing her in court for the fulfillment of her obligation. Queen Eleanor pronounced, "The lady was obliged to keep her promise to the second knight because, having taken the other for her husband, she had lost him as a lover." No. 2 was her official champion.

Very jolly and amusing and full of titillation was this love court business of the lovely, the witty, the rich Queen Eleanor. Very absurd and valueless it looks to us at first glance. But there was more behind it. As a matter of fact, the idea of romantic love that came in the Middle Ages was the biggest gift of the centuries to women. It meant, for the first time, the love of woman as a soul, quite apart from her ancient function as drudge or even as wife

and mother. The very separation of the idea of love from the realities of life and living was necessary to give it a chance to develop. Out of this new and fragile and even fantastic thing was to grow the womanhood that was to be entitled to education, to social freedom, to political power as the years rolled on. This was the impetus to all that has differentiated the women of Western Europe and us who are descended from them from the rest of the women of the world, who are slowly trailing after us. Such womanhood, sung as remote from human grasp, by silly troubadours, this dream creature, gradually became real, and able to endure the realities of life. In the highest expression of its own time this kind of new woman brought into being the noblest tribute that has ever been paid to women, when, in the Divine Comedy, Dante took the little girl in fair red dress, who was not much more than a passing vision to him, and made her the very symbol of divine wisdom and love, the blessed Beatrice.

And it goes even deeper. Romantic love, of which our Eleanor was perhaps the worldliest of worldly embodiments, was itself the outcropping of a religious emotion that was the heart of hearts of the Middle Ages, namely, its reverence and love and sense of warm intimacy with the Virgin Mary—herself the woman all-powerful, all tender, all understanding, very near, and yet removed from everything coarse or earthy. It was heavenly love, after all, reflected even into earthly love that gave birth to romance and at last to all that makes us of today glad to be women. In a single century, about Eleanor's time, France alone spent a billion dollars on building cathedrals and cathedral-like churches. Many of the greatest, like those of Paris, Rheims, Amiens, Chartres, were dedicated to "Our Lady", and all of them had lady chapels. She was "the greatest of all queens but the most womanly of all women." Always "the north porch belonged to the

Virgin, and it belonged to the Virgin because it was cold, bleak, sunless, windy and needed warmth, peace, affection, and the power to protect against the assaults of Satan and his swarming devils. There the all-suffering but the all-powerful Mother received other mothers who suffered like her, but who, as a rule, were not powerful. See how Mary received them!" says Henry Adams. Henceforth the mother who held the child meant more than race perpetuation. She was a person to be loved with reverence. The Middle Ages had to separate her body from her soul in this fantastic Kingdom of Romance in order to get the sense of both of them. Later centuries were to reunite body and soul and set them on their earthly journey. "All of us," said a clever Frenchman, "professed in the Middle Ages to adore women; the author of an old *fabliau* makes the Virgin ask of the gallant knights the subtle and searching question, 'Is thy lady fairer than I?' But in practice —in other words, in our home life—we treated women like animals, with a whip." There you have the whole woman question of Eleanor's time.

Never a time more multicolored with a pageant of romance and of fine sentiments than these Middle Ages; never a time more selfish and cruel and foul when it came down to daily living. But it was something, and in fact a very great and immeasurable thing to start the idea going that love *could* be fair and delicate and spiritual even though abstract love and concrete love were for a long time not on speaking terms with each other, and abstract love had to walk its separate path until it got its growth—perhaps one ought to say its adolescence, since the perfect union is not yet, and we are only on our way.

But our Eleanor was more than a symbol. She was a most fascinating person, worth looking at for her own sake.

Her grandfather, William, had been three things: the

greatest prince of France, richer in land and money than his king, one of the first great troubadours, and a very gay dog. When the joys of the body began to fail, he bethought him of his soul, and gave it to repentance. He called all his nobles from over his wide dominion together, made them all go through the oath of allegiance to his little granddaughter, married her with pomp and ceremony to the heir of the King, while he himself took staff and cowl to live and die in a cave of near-by Spain. Very soon fifteen year old Eleanor and her young husband found themselves King and Queen of France. She was taken away from her sunshine and her gardens, away from her people who adored her beauty and even her caprice, to live in a gloomy palace of old, old Paris, and she began to discover that the young prince whom she had married was a solemn and severe person who dressed in shabby clothes, ate and acted like a monk and had no understanding of her passion for gayety. This was a pretty position for the loveliest, most powerful girl in the world. Eleanor was bored. Things got almost to the point of explosion. Now came St. Bernard, preaching a crusade. The King had a bit of a guilty conscience, for in attempting to punish one of his subjects at the instigation of Queen Eleanor he had set fire to a church and burned up thirteen hundred perfectly innocent people. The Queen was not greatly troubled with a conscience, but she had a brilliant idea. Why not be a lady crusader! It was thrilling beyond imagination. The lure of it spread like wildfire among all her attendants. Very much, it is to be said, against the will of her husband, she took the cross with him, dressed herself and all her court ladies in Amazon costume and began to do exercises on horseback with flying pennants. Soon all of them, king, queen, knights and ladies, were on the road to Palestine. As a holy enterprise Louis VII's crusade was not much of a success, but

it was a great adventure. The feminine crusaders, whose minds were set more upon their stage costumes and their knightly escorts than upon serious warfare, got decidedly in the way of martial enterprise and things came to a climax when the king, who was earnestly out to give the pagans one of those tremendous biffs that were the joy of the Middle Ages, sent the court lady contingent off to one side with strict injunctions to camp on a bare tableland that commanded the city of Laodicea. (One cannot imagine anything more incongruous in the way of combinations than the self-willed capricious Queen of the Court of Love of France encamped at the New Testament Laodicea.) Eleanor, however, when she arrived, had no fancy for high-up desert plateaus. Down in the valley there were streams and trees and green grass and here she led her ladies for the night, while the less romantically inclined pagans took possession of the heights. The result of Eleanor's disobedience to the military orders of her lord was the loss of seven thousand knights, the capture by the Saracens of all their gay clothes, their baggage and their food, and an abrupt retreat to Antioch.

Now it happened that the city of Antioch was at that time ruled over by another French potentate, said to be the handsomest man of Europe. He proved a charming and interesting host and again Eleanor decided that this crusading was all right and again her husband decided that it was all wrong. At least, he grew so jealous of Prince Raymond of Antioch that he snatched his wife away to Jerusalem and left her there while he went away to make a fiasco of an attempt to capture Damascus. Again there were rumors of love affairs with a good-looking Saracen captive and even with Saladin himself. Pretty soon, we find King Louis and Queen Eleanor back in Paris in a high state of irritation with each other, he more severe, more monastic, more rigid than ever, she hating routine,

as who would not who had brought back from the Orient such gorgeous broideries and silks and jewels as Europe had never seen before.

And now there came to the Court of Louis to do his feudal duty to his prince, that magnificent, stirring, splendid Duke of Normandy, Geoffrey Plantagenet, and with him his son, only less splendid and handsome, the seventeen year old Henry. Once more things began to look up for Eleanor. Even now, it is easy to believe that any one named Geoffrey Plantagenet must have been a fascinating person. Eleanor had a happy idea, no less than a stroke of genius, which she proceeded to lay before the Pope, namely, that as her husband's great grandfather's grandfather had married the sister of her own great great grandfather, she and Louis were within forbidden degrees of consanguinity and that therefore their marriage should be annulled. There was, of course, no divorce, but there were several reasons for annulment. Death had claimed Geoffrey Plantagenet, but Henry was still left, even though he was a dozen years younger than the Queen of France. Moreover, Henry was an exceedingly long-headed and ambitious young man who had a perfectly good claim upon the throne of England, a claim that he had no boats, no army, no money to enforce. Eleanor with her wealth and her serried ranks of knightly adherents was the realization of all those things he needed. The beautiful Queen secured her liberty from the solemn King of France. Louis' kingdom never forgave him for letting her vast territories slip out of his control. Meanwhile, Eleanor slipped, slyly and by night journeys, through the lands of two princes who were determined to kidnap her beauty and her laughter and most of all her wealth, and got back to her own Guienne. In six weeks she was the bride of Henry Plantagenet, claimant of England. Even this much-divorced twentieth century has seldom seen more

rapid work. She gave him thirty-six ships, and pledged herself and all her wealth to the fulfillment of his ambitions. It is plain history to remember how all the future of Europe was changed by this caprice of the beautiful, arrogant, rich princess. But for her passion for adventure, her appetite for admiration, her wilfulness backed by her power, there would have been no Plantagenet Kings of England from whom has come all the later royal line; there would have been no long One Hundred Years' War between England and France based on the ever-cropping up question as to who owned Eleanor's great lands; no job for Joan of Arc. And since Eleanor, now of England and Aquitaine, became the mother of Richard Coeur de Lion, she gave one of the great romantic heroes to the world. Around her other son, King John, there welled up the first great movement toward constitutional government, that *Magna Charta* on which England and America base their rights. And one of the great love stories of history, that of King Henry, who loved and hid away fair Rosamund from the Queen whom he had married to serve his political ambitions, is another corollary to the life of Eleanor of Aquitaine, "queen by the wrath of God" as she said of herself, during those years when she and her husband were at swords' points, but during which she always kept her sons' love and became so dominating an influence through her long, long life that a modern historian has said that Queen Elizabeth is her only rival in statesmanship among women who have sat on the throne of England.

Historians have gone to a great deal of trouble to paint the Middle Ages in drab colors. A time that takes in Charlemagne and Innocent III, and that prince of princes, Henry V, is unexcelled in drama. And the women matched the time. One could dawdle over Matilda the Good, or Isabella of Hainault or many another, as well as over

Eleanor and Hrotsvita and Christina de Pisan, all in the glamor of the new light that was dawning for women, women as souls not only lovely in the sight of God, like Monica and Paula, but in the sight of men exquisite, desirable, strong even when weak, powerful agents in church and state, in spirit and in body. This the Middle Ages gave to us who come later.

It makes one think of that muddy troubled pool of King Arthur's legend, out of which there stretched up the arm "clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful."

Chapter IX

GREAT LADIES ALL

In the hushed monotonous order of a convent at Padua, lived a little girl of fourteen. Probably there were few people who even knew that Kavalier Marco Cornaro had a daughter, until, one fine day, she was sent for in a hurry, to come home to Venice, city of proud and adventurous merchants, to be married to a King for the glory of politics, as was the custom of the fifteenth century. Forty great ladies, dressed in velvets and damasks, escorted the child in the splendid galley of the Doge himself along the Grand Canal, where she looked up at balcony after balcony of its palaces hung with tapestries and flowers in honor of her newly discovered self, until, at last, they came to the landing place, to the pushing and eager crowds, to the great square, probably the loveliest in the world, and so to the Council Chamber of the Ducal Palace where, in her magnificent robes, sparkling with jewels, she received a consecrated ring from an ambassador and was returned home, Queen of Cyprus, of Armenia and of Jerusalem. For four more years, she was put through the training of a princess before she was sent out to the bridegroom she had never seen. One wonders what the child thought of it all. King Giacomo, the waiting husband, had his doubts during those four years. Perhaps he might have done better, in spite of Catarina's princely dowry and in spite of Venice's dominant ships. Perhaps Naples would have bid higher. But, as he learned, what Venice got, Venice held. It suited Venice to have a grip on Cyprus.

So, when she was eighteen, Catarina set out over thirteen hundred miles of opalescent Mediterranean with her escort of ladies and courtiers and attendants packed in gaudy, painted and gilded and tapestried galleys. It all sounds as artificial as an opera. Even the historical setting is fantastic. The Crusaders had left behind them a sprinkling of knights and adventurers in these half-Oriental countries. Little principalities sprang up from the adventurers, grew for a time and then disappeared. This particular Kingdom of Cyprus had been the gift of Richard of the Lion Heart to Guy de Lusignan, and began with a romantic love story. Now, after three hundred years a usurping prince needed help and needed it desperately. Venice was queen of the Adriatic, and its merchant Cornaro held big mortgages in Cyprus. Hence a queen. And at last Catarina came to her husband and her kingdom and her royal city of Nicosia, where dark mediaeval palace and Gothic church jostled ancient Greek temple, and where luxury played under palms and mulberry trees among tropical flowers. All the romance of the crusading West lived amid the dreams of the East. The little queen captured it by her beauty. They called her Venus risen from the sea, out of which she had sailed to them.

Only a year of serenity was Catarina's and then King Giacomo was killed in a hunting accident. He had seized his throne by plot. Plots were the order of the day and the breath of life. The nineteen year old queen had now to keep Cyprus against intrigue and blustering power until her child should be born; and she prayed that that child might be a king. She saw her physician and servant murdered before her eyes in her very palace. But what Venice took, she held. So Queen Catarina must be held on a throne by the awe of the princely city of princely merchants, held through the birth and the death of the baby king, held year after year by councillors and commission-

ers of the Republic of Venice, iron-handed rulers, while the supposed royal lady had to content herself with the pomps and ceremonials of queendom, until at last, after interminable balancing on her tight rope of queendom, when Catarina was about thirty-four, Venice believed the time ripe for it to take full possession of this strategic island and to notify other governments that the flag of St. Mark was flying on Cyprus' castles, "with the full and free determination of our most serene and beloved daughter, Catarina Cornaro." To take her away again, the Doge sent the ship with which Venice wedded the Adriatic, gilded, carved and jewelled. All Cyprus went to the shore to see her triumphant departure. All Venice came to welcome her triumphant return to the "golden city paved with emerald," when, with a magnificent gesture she made a "free gift of the kingdom of Cyprus to the Republic of Venice." Trumpets were blown and guns fired, and again the balconies of the Canal dripped fineries.

In the royal game of chess, a pawn may, by skilful handling, become a queen. Catarina had played her part, and Venice gave to the little image of a queen the lovely town of Asolo, and a court of four thousand attendants. The game went on. She had hawking and hunting parties. She had moonlight festivals and dances. She had tournaments. All the celebrities of Italy were among her guests. Poets and artists celebrated her. But she had no husband, no child, nothing but the simulacrum of a kingdom. And we shall never know what went on in her mind from the time of the convent to those last days when Venice gave her a royal funeral, with Doge and Signoria and Patriarch and citizens carrying torches over a bridge of boats and laying a crown upon her coffin.

One rapidly uses up all adjectives that mean splendor and color when one comes to the Renaissance, and the gorgeous portraits that it has left to every picture gallery in

Europe. Among them all there is none more magnificent than that of this greatest lady of Venice. It is the trappings that hold her as in a cage which catch our eyes first. Poor child, snatched from her convent, trappings were a great part of her destiny. There is the crown with every spike tipped by a jewel. In its middle it runs riot with jewels. There are the earrings heavy with pendants. Pearls and flashing stones and flamboyant embroideries of gold and silver, and a veil that bubbles out of the crown, stiff with expensiveness, form her unsaintlike halo. And behind, like a hint of the real meaning of life, one sees a bit of the torture wheel of St. Catharine from whom she took her name. No saint was this Catarina, if one may judge by the milk-white face, slender, beautiful and sleek, with its intellectual forehead and nose and its sensual lips and its golden red hair such as every great lady of Venice gloried in. Soft dark eyes turn toward us, eyes that have something of the snake in them. All the pomp and beauty and treachery and artistry of the Renaissance Titian has caught in this picture of Catarina Cornaro.

But after all, it is not the puppet queen from Venice whom we choose for our best beloved of the Renaissance times. And surely it is not the lady of still more illustrious title, that fat, greedy, lazy Bianca Maria Sforza, who marked the highest political triumph of haughty Milan when they sent her over the icy Alps with an interminable retinue of courtiers and an endless line of mules loaded with gorgeous robes and jewels (and incidentally 8000 needles and 9000 pins and six silver thimbles when such humble articles were made by hand and therefore much prized) to be the empress and the neglected wife of Emperor Maximilian. Nor is it the spectacularly lovely Lucrezia Borgia whose first two husbands were disposed of by her brother, Caesar Borgia, because they were in the way of his political ambitions, and who as daughter of

the great Borgia Pope had the unique distinction of presiding over the consistory of cardinals at the Vatican when her father was away from Rome. Surely it is not that beauty like a lightning flash, Catarina Sforza, who turned from enchanting all Rome, literary and social, to fight for her rights as Countess of Forli, and who one day bound her arch enemy to the tail of a wild horse so that his head was bumped over the rough earth until he was battered to death, and the next celebrated her victory with pomp and piety at the cathedral. She ended her life, this Catarina, as the wife of Giovanni dei Medici, the mother of the most loved warrior hero of his time, the grandmother of Cosimo, the ancestress of the royal lines of the Bourbon Kings of France, Spain and Naples, and of the royal line of England. The French named one of their most wonderful guns "Madame de Forli" after this lady of loveliness and "of bronze and thunder." We will not choose even Vittoria Colonna, exquisite as she was, the most beautiful woman in all Italy and married to the handsomest of soldiers, the Marquis of Pescara, who sold his sword and his honor to the highest bidder; the Vittoria so loved and honored that it was a great public event when she wrote a sonnet to be copied and circulated and discussed by churchmen and nobles up and down the land; the Vittoria whose greatest achievement was to transform the grim old agnostic artist, whose name is highest of all his craft, into a devout Christian who marked his conversion by immortal frescoes and unbelievable statues. "Without wings I fly with your wings. By your genius I am raised to the skies," Michelangelo wrote to her, and after her death, "Her soul, that fashioned mine."

There were learned ladies for us to pick from. Our nineteenth and twentieth centuries began by trembling and then plumed themselves on what they had done for educating girls. But how about Olympia Morata back in the

fifteen hundreds, who delivered a lecture on "The Philosophical Problems of the Paradoxes of Cicero," or Belissia Gotzadina in the thirteen hundreds, who was made a doctor of civil and common law at twenty-seven, and who lectured to crowds at the University of Bologna, then the leading center of learning of the world. It is said, however, that she was so wonderfully beautiful that one wonders whether the throngs of young men who sat in front of her were using their eyes more actively than their ears. (Let Bryn Mawr and Wellesley and Vassar look to their laurels as centres of feminine learning!)

And there is still another kind to make us moderns halt before our own self-esteem. We think our girls who put on ugly khaki or severe nurses' uniform and went into the thick of war very wonderful—as they were—and a new thing in the world—as they were not. Behold ladies who not only amused the well and cared for the wounded, but got down to bed-rock and dug fortifications, and with all due regard for the gaudy trappings of their times. "It shall never be, you ladies of Siena, that I will not immortalize you so long as the book of Monluc shall live; for in truth you are worthy of immortal praise if ever women were. At the beginning of the noble resolution these people took to defend their liberty, all the ladies of Siena divided themselves into three squadrons: the first led by Signora Forteguerra, who was herself clad in violet, as also those of her train, being clad in the fashion of a nymph, short and discovering her buskin; the second was the Signora Piccolomini, attired in carnation satin and her troop in the same livery; the third was Signora Livia Fausta, apparelled all in white as also her train with her white ensign. Their arms were picks, shovels, baskets and bavins; and in this equipage they went to begin the fortifications." No wonder Blaise de Monluc, himself a Gascon soldier, added, "Never was there so fine a sight."

There were even feminists like Lucrezia Marmmeli who wrote *The Nobleness and Excellence of Women and the Faults and Imperfections of Men* and they found their masculine supporters, such as Paul de Rebera, who published *The Immortal Triumphs and Heroic Enterprises of Eight Hundred and Forty-Five Women.* Let us of today admit, with a little kindly laughter at ourselves, that we are not so flamingly different as we thought ourselves.

The Greeks had a saying, 'Count no man happy till he reach the grave." One never knows what fortune has in store until life is seen whole. Most of these great ladies went down in shadows. But there is one, and she the most captivating of them all, who rode on life's top wave, "La prima donna del monde", as her own time called her, "the first lady of the world", not only because of her wealth, or her beauty, or her title, or her magnificence, though she had all these, but for some charm that has left itself over even to these days. One would have liked to watch Isabella d'Este from a hidden corner of her court. Perhaps one reason we love her better than the cameo-like Vittoria Colonna is that the Marchesa of Pescara was almost like marble in her perfection, while the Marchesa of Mantua had many little human failings, that give her a homey atmosphere in spite of her magnificence.

If you would like to step without ceremony into about the best aristocratic society this old world ever saw, you may do so by taking to your heart this charming Isabella. Good company it is, not because of imposing magnitude or even of supreme rank, for it centered in a town not as big as Norristown, Pennsylvania, perhaps the size of Colorado Springs, but because it is so glorified by the wit and culture, by the fine intellectual standards and keen artistic appetite of its little golden-haired marchesa that it has a kind of sweetscented immortality linked with her name. If she had been commonplace, Mantua would have been

nothing but a geographical name, the antique birthplace of the Latin Virgil. Since she was what she was, she seems to sit there forever smiling out of her indomitable good humor and inviting the rest of us to share in her delightful life. No self-advertiser was Isabella (as even queens may be in these latter days), no supreme monarch set on a pedestal. Her greatness was the flowering of herself that made her more than a match for any other of her day, and that the day of gorgeousness and excitement that we call the Renaissance.

If Isabella d'Este is delightfully worth knowing on her own account for one's personal pleasure, there is another reason for making her acquaintance, and that is that the Renaissance introduced women to a magnificent share in the intellectual life of the world; and of the womanhood of that time, Isabella is the distilled epitome. To know her is like having a moment's glimpse of what the future was to bring to us—us the ordinary women. Therefore one loves to linger with the memory of this rare lady who has been the subject over whom scholars have given themselves the privilege of dawdling for years. Every little detail of her is fascinating, and fortunately there are plenty of details in the two thousand letters that she wrote, in the portraits painted by the great masters, in sonnets and poems and praises. We know her more intimately than we know the woman next door and treasure her as fondly as did the adoring sixteenth century.

We start with two sisters, one dark and gay, one gay and fair-haired in spite of her black eyes, like two princesses in a fairy tale, daughters of the house of Este that ruled, as was the way with little nobles in the principalities of Italy, with a great sense of its own magnificent aristocracy, in the grim fortressed town of Ferrara. Daughters were married early with great political haggling for alliance in those days, but they were also trained for

their positions, so when the representative of the Marquis of Mantua went scouting for a bride for the heir, he was amazed at the child he found. She danced like a seraph. She sang wonderfully, accompanying herself on the lute. She not only spoke perfect Latin, but she was a trained scholar in all classical lore, and they were not so stupid in Renaissance times as to think that a brilliant mind was a handicap to a woman. She was a good little housewife who had two bone needles and one gold one even in her infant outfit. But beyond all mere enumeration of merits was the little girl's fascination, that bubbled out of her and was all intertwined with the brilliancy of the daily life and conversation of the provincial court in which she had grown up. So, on one day, the two sisters were publicly betrothed, dark Beatrice, who "could not live without a crown", to the grim swarthy Ludovico, regent of Milan, golden Isabella to the young Francisco Gonzaga, Marchese of Mantua.

Then began great preparations for the wedding. Painters and goldsmiths and carvers made a baker's dozen of chests covered with gold leaf and ultramarine to carry her trousseau. As religion was a part of every-day life, a silver portable altar with gorgeously bound books was built but a skilled Mantuan. Venice provided tapestries for her rooms. And when the wedding day came, little Isabella rode through the streets in her chariot draped with cloth of gold, the gift of her father, and beside her rode the Duke of Urbino and the Ambassador of Naples. The banquet hall was hung with tapestries on which Flemish weavers had worked for a hundred years. Mantua at the other end of her journey welcomed the bride with her escort of a hundred courtiers by hanging its streets with garlands and brocades, and seventeen thousand people out of the thirty thousand population lined the ways. Ambassadors were there from all the towns of Italy. So Isabella d'Este

became Isabella Gonzaga and began a new life for the small town and for herself.

Francisco, her husband, was a brilliant soldier and politician, as a man had need to be in those times, and he loved his dogs and his Barbary horses and his hunts; but all those things do not make good society. It was Isabella who created that. Living in Renaissance Italy was like being set in an earthly paradise of both nature and art, and then constantly bombarded by the most frightful storm that one can imagine, bolts of flame striking all around, and every bolt accompanied by a roar of thunder. Most of Isabella's friends were struck. Some were toppled from their high places. Some were shrivelled to ashes. Even her husband tottered now and again when there were plots at home or battles abroad, but to Isabella tact and delicate diplomacy were as the breath she breathed, and they came to the front whenever there was danger. Then she set him on his feet again, whether he was ruffling it up and down Italy, trading his sword now to one faction, now to another, or whether he was making himself conspicuous with a fair lady who was not his wife. Quite tranquilly she managed to keep his friends loyal, and his little kingdom safe, but all the time she was building up for herself the kind of life and the kind of court she loved. If Beatrice could not live without a crown, Isabella could not live without beauty. The finest and loveliest things in the world flowed toward her. In spite of the tumult of little wars, Italy was decking herself, as with jewels, with pictures that are today priceless, with statues that are the despair of our later days, with palaces and cathedrals that we travel the oceans to see; and every writer and artist considered it the height of his ambition to play a part in the court of Isabella d'Este and to work for her in exactly the fashion that she dictated.

She was the kind of woman who somehow stimulated

every man to be his best and do his finest, and there is no better thing that can be said of a woman. "I am in the habit of thinking that a thing for you is never so perfect but it might be more so," one of her friends wrote.

The little town of Mantua lay on an island in the Mincio and one could reach it only by a long causeway (convenient for shooting down enemies), at the end of which frowned the castle, looking inhospitable and ready to repel attack, with its thick stone walls. Inside the dark halls and passages, however, there began to be beauty famous in these days of art. The bed-chamber of the Marchese and Marchesa was frescoed by the great Mantegna, not with mere portraits of the family, but with paintings of them all engaged in events of family importance, here receiving a foreign ambassador, there welcoming a cardinal, terraces and loggias and backgrounds of the graceful city itself painted in, tapestries and garlands and playing Cupids, until it was more like a dream room than a mere bed-chamber. If there was a lovely bit of Venetian crystal or silver or a noble tapestry or a rare musical instrument, Isabella must have it. She loved books, especially romantic books with fine bindings. "Ask all the booksellers in Venice for a list of all the Italian books in prose or verse containing battle stories and fables of heroes in ancient or modern times, more especially those that relate to the paladins of France, and send them to us as soon as possible," she commands. One after another the great artists, Perugino, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Raphael, Titian, Correggio, were bidden to her little but perfect court and minutely instructed as to exactly what and how they were to paint for her. Some of them left her portraits, the most famous being Leonardo's lovely drawing and Titian's gorgeous painting. Romano built and decorated. And her ladyship could be imperative in those days when nobles dictated and genius obeyed. There was one painter who

was reputed to be dilatory and who was commanded to decorate her *studiolo*. "If it is not finished on our return," she wrote him, "we intend to put you into the dungeon of the castello. And this, we assure you, is no jest on our part." "We enclose a list of the devices which we wish to have painted on the frieze, and hope that you will arrange them as you think best and make them appear as beautiful and eloquent as possible. You can paint whatever you like inside the cupboards as long as it is not ugly, because if it is, you will have to paint it all over again at your own expense and be sent to pass the winter in the dungeon, where you can, if you like, spend a night for your pleasure now, to see if the accommodation is to your taste! Perhaps this may make you more anxious to please us in the future." (No union labor in the Renaissance! Imagine a town the size of Colorado Springs breeding such a feminine potentate!) This autocratic attitude was of the time, not characteristic of Isabella alone. When she chose to build a retreat from the tumultuous world, with jewels of rooms overlooking terrace and far river and rolling country, she called it "Paradiso", and every artist in Italy helped to make it an earthly paradise. Even when the rest of the world went mad with bloodshed up to the walls of the Holy City itself, Isabella travelled down to Rome and secured a cardinalship for her son and a few works of art that she had coveted a long time.

Nowadays her treasures are scattered among collections and museums in France and England and Germany, here a painting, there a bit of majolica, here a piece of marble. Mantua is a plundered tomb of beauty.

Life was not all highbrow and filled with intellectual and artistic interests. These children of the Renaissance were too spontaneous for that. There were dancing and pageants and singing and laughter. Isabella was bubbling with jokes and fun. There were long afternoons in the

gardens, and the gardens of Italy are marvels, when friends sat and chatted together and let conversation wander where it would. Let it plunge into discussions that touched the foundations of life, or linger over the last sonnet or philosophical treatise or simply play with the hours.

One of the most interesting things about that famous age of the fine arts is that the great people who were in the midst of it considered *conversation* the finest art of all. When highly trained men and women, with vivid minds, with wit and wisdom, came together and discussed frankly and genuinely the things in which they were most interested, there could be hardly anything more delightful in the world. So thought the courts of Isabella and her friend the Duchess of Urbino. They have left us pictures of those brilliant days.

There was immense curiosity of mind over the world that had suddenly become bigger than men had dreamed before. Some servants were sent to Spain to buy horses, and they wrote back, "A Savona sailor, named Columbus, has landed here bringing 30,000 ducats in gold as well as pepper and other spices, and parrots as big as falcons and as red as pheasants. They found trees bearing fine wool and others which produce wax and linen fibres, and men like Tartars, tall and active with long hair falling over their shoulders. They eat human flesh and fatten men as we do capons and are called cannibals. I myself have seen sixty parrots of variegated colors and twelve Indians who have been sent to the King." More letters came about this unbelievable far-off land. One can imagine the excitement and discussion. Or a friend went to England and was amazed at the culture and civilization that he found in the country that they all thought inhabited by barbarians. Henry VIII. could ride and dance and was a scholar and a statesman, said the Nuncio, and, in fine, England was a hopeful place. They were as interested and as

sceptical as many Europeans are today about the civilization of the United States, and some Easterners about the civilization of the Middle West.

One thing that the Renaissance delighted to laugh over was dwarfs, who learned to perform antics for their masters. Isabella had some in whom she delighted. Nanino and Nanina were not only amusing, but they were set to breeding their kind, and the dwarf offspring were promised to friends, just as well-bred puppies might be today. The marchesa had a whole suite of low-ceilinged rooms and tiny passages for her Delia and other favorite dwarfs, and one can imagine the great laughter surrounding a wrestling match between one of these tiny creatures and a goat. And there was a dear little dog, named Aura, who fell over a cliff and was killed. Straightway poets composed epitaphs and epigrams and elegies for "the chaste and noble Aura." All genius hastened to serve even the most trivial of Isabella's interests.

Of course there were friends of her own kind, dearly loved. Her sister-in-law, the Duchess of Urbino, was chief among them, a lady second only to Isabella herself, but beaten by the political winds of misfortune; the great Vittoria Colonna; sister Beatrice of Milan, who died too early; the magnificent Queen of Cyprus; Lucrezia Borgia became her sister-in-law and spent her later years quite morally and pleasantly. Most of these fine creatures went down in tragedy. Only Isabella lived to grow more prosperous and to keep to the end her vivid quality of being alive to beauty of nature and art and on, on, to the end. There was visiting back and forth, though it was a great and difficult thing to travel, and we hear of Isabella and her mother going to Venice with four hundred horses and eight hundred courtiers. Most of the visits had political aims, and Isabella with her beauty and extraordinary charm and understanding of the currents below the surface, pulled

the wires and saved the day many a time. Once she was in Rome when, at the hands of the Germans, it went through the most brutal and cruel sacking that it had seen since Roman times. Pope and Cardinals scurried into the fortress of St. Angelo and barely saved their lives. Isabella managed that her house alone was undisturbed and the friends who took refuge with her were safe. When the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire (no mere Kaiser, then, of a mere empire. It was *Holy* and *Roman*) came to Italy to be crowned by the Pope with the iron crown that had the nail of the True Cross twisted in it, Isabella managed to get her son elevated by him to be a Duke instead of a Marquis, and "The Lord of the Whole World" visited her twice and wanted to handle lovingly her treasures of art. At Venice, she charmed the grim Signory out of everything Mantua wanted.

There was a sterling quality to our Lady of Mantua, too, that made her a faithful friend and an outspoken truth-teller. And when her husband, brave soldier that he was, had flaunted his mistress almost before her face, and then dared to reproach her for staying too long away from home on a political mission that served their family interests, she wrote him, "I know that I have acquired new friends on your behalf as well as on my own, and that I have behaved myself as I ought to do and as I am accustomed to behave, for thanks to the grace of God and myself, I never needed to be controlled by others or to be reminded how to govern my actions. . . . But even if you should always treat me badly, I would never cease to do what is right, and the less love you show me, the more I shall always love you, because, in truth, this love is part of myself, and I became your wife so early that I can never remember being without it. . . . From one who loves you as well as herself,—Isabella Marchesa di Mantova."

The story of artists and wars and politics of Isabella's time belongs to the history of civilization and of art, but there is another charming side that it is fair to touch on, the eternally feminine one of *clothes*. Probably no other woman that has ever lived has been such a monarch in the kingdom of fashion as this same little potentate, and that in an age when gorgeousness ran riot. Princesses from all over Europe sent anxious inquiries as to how she was wearing sleeves, and begged for patterns. She possessed one far-famed dress of eighty sable skins. "We hear of a constant succession of orders for rubies, emeralds, diamond rosettes, engraved amethysts, rosaries of black amber, and gold enamelled roses, corals, turquoises and gems unnumbered. If a goldsmith keeps the imperious lady waiting unduly, the Renaissance is skilled in uncomfortable punishments. What became of the dressmakers we do not hear, but they must have been overwhelmed with the costly variety of Oriental silks and velvets, the priceless brocades and fine linens with which they had to carry out her designs." The King of France discouraged his queen from visiting such Italian ladies as Isabella for fear she would feel shabby in their presence. Once in a while there is a detailed description of the kind of robes worn on state occasions, as when Lucrezia Borgia married Isabella's brother. The first day she wore a robe of gold with underbodice of crimson satin, the next day one of gold tissue with a mantel of woven gold brocaded in relief, open at the sides and lined with ermine. Or Isabella appeared in a dress of green velvet embroidered with gold and with her black velvet mantle trimmed with lynx, or in a gown of white silver tabis, her head and neck decked with pearls. And so it goes. Elaborate hair dressing and complexion care became fine arts. But along with splendor went a new refinement in the world, for the feasts, pageants of color and delicacy, ceased to be "gorging and guzzling", and

turned themselves into an appeal to delicacy of appetite and service. One interesting thing about our Isabella's famous clothes is that a group of Italian dressmakers took advantage of her reputation to migrate to England, and the expression "mantua maker" came into our language and has lasted for some hundreds of years.

And why do Isabella and the Renaissance mean so much to the rest of us? Only because it happened that Italy set the pace for the rest of western civilization. Just as the far-off queens inquired about Isabella's dresses, so did France and Spain and Germany and England follow hungrily in the wake of Italy's appetite for wisdom and beauty and vivid life. Chaucer and Shakespeare stole their plots and located their stories at Padua or Mantua. And women, as it were, drank deep breaths of life, for the first time freely. Life splendid, exciting, satisfying,—sensation and emotion. No wonder they were willing to pay the price of tragedy to win life wholly rewarding while it lasted. Moreover, men were more in the meshes of politics and war than their wives. "Women having monopolized all that made life worth living, men one day awoke to the fact that women were the glory of all distinguished families, and that, thanks to them, life had become an art and a passion," says R. de Maulde la Claviere, a French historian of the Renaissance. No wonder that we women look back with peculiar gratitude to those great days and say, "Then we were truly born."

But there were other sides to it—dreadful other sides. The great ladies, to be sure, were many and splendid, but after all they were only a few out of the masses of women. Under all those scintillating artistries lay the unnumbered miseries of other folk, dirty, ignorant, trampled into the slime, and to their lords of no more value than the beasts. You may be sure that whenever men are downtrodden, women lie still deeper and deeper in mud, forgotten. And

these were the majority of the human race. Even the women of noble birth were handed around like puppets, given in marriage when they were babies, to serve political ambitions. How, in spite of all, they managed to glorify their lives, is a miracle. Here, to show this reverse side, is a curious bit of a conversation between a matron and a bride, taken from the great Erasmus. Says the bride, " 'What a hell is marriage! What slave's business! And for whom, ye gods! For a gambler, a brute, a rake! 'Twould be far better to sleep with a pig!' The other soothes her. She must take her husband as she finds him, as a coarse animal, a sort of elephant to be tamed with a lump of sugar. She must appear to give in to him about trifles, to put up with some of his whims and eccentricities, and above all to lay in a large stock of good temper and never be idle or dull, for the husband has a perfect horror of being bored, perhaps because he is such a bore himself. What she must do is to leave him what he has, and give him what he lacks, those charming possessions with which the new system of civilization has endowed women. She may even add a little affection, and then, one fine day, she will be struck with astonishment (for men do not shine at finesse) to see this rough husband of hers at her feet, and instead of considering her a nonentity, taking her for the image of God." That, baldly, was the position of women before the law, and chained by the customs and handicaps that society imposed on them. It was only when a social genius like our Isabella showed the power and mind that a woman might possess that the whole sex moved up.

The splendor of the Renaissance was all aristocratic. Against its high lights lay deep shadows in which the common people moved and lived, almost invisible and yet quite as human and as capable of suffering and with nerves as keen as Vittoria or Queen Catarina or Isabella. Splendor

can cost too much. These days left a long, long trail to be winded toward days less lurid and brilliant but more full of sunshine. Such as Isabella showed the goal—women who gleaned the treasures of the mind and spirit out of a tumultuous world.

Chapter X

ONLY WOMEN COULD MAKE IT SUCCEED

It is as though the seeds of the Renaissance were to be scattered over the world by migratory birds, carrier pigeons, poets, painters, play writers, and here and there a woman.

Catherine, daughter of Marchese Tisani of Italy, married a minor French nobleman. No great event this, one would think. And France? Already there had been one great literary lady, that "pearl of pearls", Margaret of Navarre, sister of Francis I, sought by king and emperor, and author of the *Heptameron*, acclaimed by its own age, but whose merry tales ring coarse and dull to our ears. More of a precursor of the new birth was she than even her great brother, she who loved its spirit while he loved its ostentation, she the mother of one of France's great heroes, Henry IV. One remembers also that she wrote, "It is the business of all women to torment, kill and damn men." Sex antagonism was stronger in the days of the woman in chains than in the age of the woman free. We had to wait for the nineteenth century for Frances Willard's words, "If there is a spectacle more odious and distasteful than a man who hates women, it is a woman that hates men."

All of us have, it is to be hoped, had a period in our adolescence when we stamped up and down the room roaring Macaulay's *Battle of Ivry*.

"Oh was there ever such a knight,
In friendship or in war,

As our sovereign Lord, King Henry,
The soldier of Navarre?"

But to Madame de Rambouillet, née Tisani, of Italian standards, King Henry's court looked coarse, vulgar, even dirty. She carried with her to Paris two unusual gifts, a high soul that fed itself on lovely things, and an unusual ability to translate her ways of thinking into her ways of living. So Madame de Rambouillet drew herself aside from the loud pleasures and the intrigues of the court and set up her home with standards of her own. Near the Palais Royale it was and opposite the Tuileries, where now a hundred thousand Americans sweep by every year, and in it she put the blue and gold draperies, the crystal bowls of Venice, always flower-filled, that she had brought. One of the finest traditions that she had imported from the Italy of the Renaissance was of the art of conversation, spiced with gayety. The court of the King ate and drank scandal for its daily pabulum. Madame would have no scurrilous gossip under her roof. People might come who had something to contribute that pleased her other guests, and that something might be wit or wisdom or it might be beauty or gallantry. Genius and birth met on democratic terms here, in spite of the aristocracy outside. Did people come? For thirty years they came, whoever was distinguished and charming and brilliant in France, whoever was ambitious for distinction or brilliancy or charm, turning an indifferent back on the court, spending afternoons and evenings in the salon and the gardens of the Rambouillets and blossoming out into something more interesting to themselves and to other people than they had ever dreamed was in them. The heart of this great lady was not bent on celebrating her own glories, but on making her guests feel wholly at ease, without self-consciousness, while she drew out their best. To the charm of her home

and its brilliancy, Madame de Rambouillet added a demand for good manners, that "politeness that makes a man seem externally what he ought to be internally," was the definition.

So was born the Salon. And all that was truly fine in France found its way to the garden and the halls of Rambouillet. Armand du Plessis, Cardinal Richelieu, dictator of his age, came to read his discourse on love. Very curious he as to what people said of it and of him. Corneille gave them the first hearing of his dramas; "Le Grand Condé" had his celebrated love affair with the fair Mademoiselle Vigeau; Chapelain spouted his verses, *Pucelle* ("Doubtless it is a very beautiful poem, but also very tiresome"); or the beautiful Angélique Paulet, who had caught the fancy of the King, sang to her own lute accompaniment in the garden. They played little comedies, and gave gay little fêtes with mythological gods and goddesses. They wrote sonnets and songs in praise of each other. Madame de Rambouillet's daughter Julie, who could be either serious or frivolous and always lovely, was the heart of it. The Duc de Montausier wished to marry her, but her mother could not let her go; so during the years that he was kept waiting, he made a great volume, the *Garlande de Julie*, with a flower and a verse on each page. Mademoiselle Scudéry was the most ponderous of all of them, a homely, petty, clever woman who knew all that should be known by the advanced woman of her day, housekeeping and cooking and medicine and agriculture, how to make perfumes, how to play the lute, how to dabble in Spanish and Italian and even to quote Homer and Aristotle. She wrote the first "psychological" novel and her little world went wild over it. In fact, its vogue spread over all the realm of the polite world of Europe—for *The Grand Cyrus* portrayed the Court of Rambouillet, which every town in every other country was trying to imitate.

A new word came into existence to describe these ladies. It was "précieuse." At first it meant the lady who was lovable and witty and well informed, and an inspiration to all men, but by and by, it began to include the lesser women who were only imitations of the real thing. So Molière wrote his famous *Les Précieuses Ridicules* brought out first for Madame de Rambouillet and her guests to their gusts of laughter. It showed women "who salted their beauty with folly." Not very scholarly, not very profound, not revolutionary were these salons, but somehow cleansing and magnetic. Language grew finer and more delicate and took on that exquisiteness that France has maintained to this day. Manners grew courtly and stately. Imagination and charm filled the days. Women were "meant to be the ornament of the world, made to be served and adored."

Here, too, one day after Salon Rambouillet had become a great factor, Monsieur de Sévigné brought his new bride, just making her bow to the court after her years of training under her uncle, the Abbé in his priory; tremendously in love with her handsome soldier of a husband; a joyous, sweet and appreciative girl avid for just such life. The statesmen and playwrights, poets and artists and scientific men bowed down before her fascination which was infinitely beyond what mere beauty could give. They kissed her hands and wrote her sonnets; and she laughed and danced and bubbled with gay wit. She had found her world, and her world lay at her feet.

The husband that she had adored proved as light of love as he was handsome, and as wasteful of their fortune as he was light of love; so she learned by experience what many another woman found out, that husbands, like beauty, must be more than skin deep. Finally Ninon de l'Enclos laid hold of Monsieur Sévigné, and Ninon was the kind of gorgeous and selfish and permanent beauty that spiritu-

ally resembles an octopus, whatever she may be outside. As a matter of fact, three generations of Sévigné men became her victims as the years rolled on.

There was a retreat to the country place to retrench expenses, the birth of a small son and a small daughter, a duel and death, and Madame Sévigné, at twenty-five found herself a widow with two children; but with a Frenchwoman's genius for managing family finances, she was, after a few years of seclusion, back in her gay world of Paris that welcomed her to its arms.

Isabella d'Este, to be sure, was called by her own time and land, "the greatest lady of the world." But every woman would prefer to be the most loved woman of the world. It was said of Madame de Sévigné that "There have been greater and better women, no doubt, but in the whole world not one so delightful," and one great contemporary wrote of her, "I have never seen so many attractions, so much gayety, so much coquetry, so much innocence and virtue. No one ever understood better the art of having grace without affectation, raillery without malice, gayety without folly, propriety without constraint and virtue without severity"; and another, "All that you say has such charm that the words attract the smiles and the graces toward you. The brilliancy of your intellect gives such luster to your complexion and your eyes, that although it seems that wit should touch only the ears, yours dazzles the sight. You are the most courteous and amiable person that ever lived." This woman, after she has been dead for two hundred years, remains still a kind of cult. Surely there is something about her that must catch the imaginations of all other women, and set them to asking, what was there about her that left a trail of joy and charm wherever she set her foot. Well, she is the heroine of one of the most famous love stories that the old world keeps close to its heart. That is something; but there is more. This love story is that of a

mother toward her daughter,—and here it stands unique, and particularly worth recalling in this age when we are being told that sex is the yard-stick of emotion. Thank God, who has given us humans many kinds of love that grip us deep. Madame de Sévigné's adoration of "the prettiest girl in France" told through years of the most adoring and effervescent letters ever written, is one of the classic romances of history.

Nowadays, if one loves Madame de Sévigné, as myriads of people do, one trails down into old Paris to see the place where once she lived. In her day, the broad staircases and the wide salons and the little intimate rooms of the Carnavalet Palace were filled with great men and brilliant women, with laughter and sparkle and bits of significant wisdom let lightly fall. Now there are only the memories in museum cases. Many men fell in love with Madame de Sévigné, but if she loved in return it was only a ripple. The prettiest girl in France in her mother's eyes, was her love.

But while the little girl was growing up, the mother was deep in this most vivid, most fascinating, liveliest social life the world has ever seen, built entirely by women out of their intensive study of human nature, and thronged by brilliant men, some of them bearing immortal names, some only the celebrities of a day, but all under the spell. The Salon as an institution was now fairly launched.

In this kingdom of women, our dear Sévigné was a princess royal, and in the midst of dubious morality she kept herself absolutely clean. No dirt clings to her skirts. And she was developing that great love that is part of our literary heritage. Love is often great in spite of the littleness of the beloved solely because of the nobility of the lover. It was so in this case. The daughter was a rather heavy girl, pretty enough at first sight, but with none of

that electric spark that binds interest and affection forever. So one of these days her mother began to be worried about her marriage. The traditions of the time required that, if one happened to be a woman, one either got married or went into a convent, and Madame Sévigné had no fancy for putting her adored star-daughter behind walls. Finally there appeared Monsieur de Grignan, old to be sure, but blessedly rich and a person in society. "All his other wives have conveniently died," wrote Madame de Sévigné, with her light humor. Monsieur was expected to take a high court office, but unfortunately, instead, he retired to a great country house in Provence (whither one also trails Madame de Sévigné) and because of this separation, the world owes a debt of gratitude to Providence, for it gave us those rare letters for which a hundred thousand people have loved the mother, who poured out her devotion by every post, gay, self-revealing, human, spontaneous, with a touch always of the enchantment that was the woman, but which few people have been able to put into mere words. What was going on at court, the last intellectual excitement, a "delectable" sermon by a new eloquent preacher, a visit to the infamous poisoner, Madame Brinvilliers, anything and everything tossed into the air as delicate and multicolored as a soap bubble. It would be vastly better to read Madame de Sévigné than to read about her, for no one but herself can reveal her fascinating self. Here is a bit that shows how a mere incident (the king's love, Madame de Montespan, had a new dress) can become a piece of literature.

"Monsieur de L'Anglée has made Madame de Montespan a present of a robe of cloth of gold, bound with a double gold border embroidered and worked with gold so that it makes the finest stuff ever imagined by the wit of man. It was contrived by fairies in secret, for no living

wight had knowledge of it. The manner of presenting it was equally mysterious. Madame de Montespan's mantua maker carried home a suit she had bespoken, having made it fit ill on purpose. You need not be told what exclamations and scoldings there were on the occasion. 'Madame,' said the mantua maker, trembling with fear, 'as there is so little time to alter it in, will you have the goodness to try whether this other dress will fit better?' It was produced. 'Ah!' cried the lady, 'how beautiful! What stuff is this! Pray where did you get it? It must have fallen from the clouds, for a mortal could never have executed anything like it.' The dress was tried on. It fitted to a hair. In came the King. 'It was made for you, Madame,' said the mantua maker. Immediately it was concluded that it must be a present from somebody; but from whom, was the question. 'It must be L'Anglée!' said the King. 'It must be L'Anglée!' said Madame de Montespan. 'Nobody but L'Anglée could have thought of so magnificent a present! It is L'Anglée! It is L'Anglée!' Everybody exclaims, 'It is L'Anglée! It is L'Anglée!' and I, my child, to be in the fashion, say, 'It is L'Anglée! It is L'Anglée!' "

If you would make the acquaintance of a whole panorama of gay, engaging folk, who will not be any strain on your intellect, and who are yet served up for your delectation in a literary form that is good enough to be classic, you will adopt Madame de Sévigné.

And always through her letters some of that agony of far-away love that every mother must feel for the child that has slipped away, the child of her love, her yearning, her daily questioning as to whether all goes well for the being into whom she has poured herself, and which Madame de Sévigné above all others has expressed for the universal mother.

"My heart and mind are full of you; I cannot think of you without weeping, and I think of you incessantly. I seek you continually and I seem to have lost everything in losing you. It seems to me that I did not embrace you sufficiently in parting. I did not tell you how satisfied I am with your affection. I hope for no consolation but from your letters; and yet I know they will only make me sigh more deeply. In short, my child, I live but for you. Would I loved God with equal fervor."

Other great ladies entered the salon field, none finer than Madame de Lafayette who had the choicest, most aristocratic and most intimate of circles, and who wrote a real romance, *The Princess of Cleves*. "Before Madame de Lafayette," Voltaire said, "people wrote improbable things in stilted style." She made real human beings a fashion in literature. There is the Grande Mademoiselle, a spectacular Amazon who rode at the head of troops into Orléans and intrigued with the great Condé until the king for a kind of regal punishment sent her out of Paris to live in the country. Here in order to pass away monotonous days she invented the writing of "pen portraits", and the fashion spread like lightning. It fitted in exactly with salon social traditions. It became a new and essentially French form of letters. But one of the great excitements about La Grande Mademoiselle was her love affairs. The King would have liked this or that royal suitor, but her magnificence fixed itself and its affections on a mere man. No! Here royalty drew the line. No princess had a right to fall in love with a mere man. There were storms of weeping, preparations for a wedding, prohibitions from the king. The thing went on for ten years. Here is Madame de Sévigné's letter about the result.

"I am going to tell you a thing the most astonishing, the most surprising, the most marvellous, the most miraculous, the most magnificent, the most confounding, the greatest, the least, the rarest, the most public, the most private, till today the most brilliant, the most enviable—in short, a thing of which there is but one example in past ages and that not an exact one neither, a thing that we cannot believe in Paris, then how will it get credit at Lyons? A thing that makes everybody cry, 'Lord, have mercy on us!' A thing, in fine that is to happen on Sunday next, when those who are present will doubt the evidence of their senses; a thing that, though it is to be done on Sunday will perhaps not be finished on Monday. I can not bring myself to tell you. Guess what it is. I give you three times to do it in. What! Not a word to throw at a dog! Well, then, I find I must tell you. Monsieur de Lauzun is to be married next Sunday at the Louvre to—pray guess to whom. I give you four times to do it in. I give you six. I give you a hundred. Says Madame de Coulanges, 'It is perhaps Mademoiselle de la Vallière.' Indeed, madame, it is not. 'It is Mademoiselle de Ritz then.' No, nor she either. You are extremely provincial. 'Lord bless me,' say you, 'what stupid wretches we are. It is Mademoiselle de Colbert all the time.' Nay, now you are still further from the mark. 'What, then it must certainly be Mademoiselle Créqui.' You have it not yet. Well, then I find I must tell you at last. He is to be married next Sunday at the Louvre with the King's leave, to—guess, pray guess her name—he is to be married to Mademoiselle, the Great Mademoiselle, Mademoiselle the daughter of the late Monsieur, Mademoiselle grand-daughter of Henry Fourth, Mademoiselle d'Eu, Mademoiselle de Dombes, Mademoiselle Montpensier, Mademoiselle d'Orléans, Mademoiselle the King's cousin-german, Mademoiselle destined to the throne, Mademoiselle the only match in France that was

worthy of Monsieur. What glorious matter for talk. If you should have burst forth like a Bedlamite, say that we have told you a lie, that it is false, that we are making a jest of you, and that a petty jest it is, without wit or invention—in short, if you abuse us, we shall think you quite in the right for we have done just the same thing ourselves. Farewell."

And the funniest thing of all is that after getting her way by ten years of storm, and the sacrifice of half of her estate, the Grand Mademoiselle tired of her count in a very short time and got rid of him in an equally royal manner.

Some of the greatest salonières were old ladies. Some were like Madame Geoffrin, who was among the most successful, a pious middle-class plain person, who had suddenly grown rich, and who amused herself Sundays tying up little bags of gold to be given to the poor. Madame Geoffrin, to be sure, reminds one of certain modern American ladies who have built success on the money of unconsidered husbands. "What has become of that elderly gentleman I used to see around here?" asked one of her frequenters. "Oh, that was my husband. He is dead," she answered pleasantly. Yet this rather heavy, uneducated old lady had the gift of making other people happy and at their best. Her salon is one of the greatest of the great.

For two hundred years the salons went on. Their fame spread all over Europe and women everywhere tried to imitate them, though none even approached our French salonières. They ceased to be "white and shining" like Madame de Rambouillet's and Madame de Sévigné's. They fell from their first purity and began to play politics and intrigue and ambitions. Many of the salonières were not even decently good, such as Madame de Tencin, of whom it was said that if she poisoned you it would be by the most agreeable of poisons, or of Madame d'Épinay, whom

Voltaire adored, that she was "the most cheerfully and goodnaturedly wicked of any woman in French history," or Madame Cornuel, "Every sin she confesses is an epigram."

Eyes travelling down the centuries, following women, women, tragic or riding on the wave of success, women flouting or cringing, cowardly or fighting with fate, will be stopped, I think, at Julie, most picturesque of all the salonières. Here is a flotsam and jetsam girl, the illegitimate daughter of a small noblewoman, never beautiful, often ill, always torn by her own spirit, very poor. No grip on fate, one would say, if one were guessing, to ease her way to greatness. In the picture she stands beside the chair of a blind, frail old woman tied down by invalidism. One would not pick this for a hopeful combination. Yet these two held in the hollows of their hands all the distinguished society of their day, They made themselves the arbiters of its brilliance and its power in the gayest and most excitement-loving of times when, indeed, to rule their little set was to hold dominion over the ways of thinking men and women, and all the world crowded their doors.

Whether the story of Julie's life is the record of unexampled triumph over circumstances, or whether it is a Sunday school tale of moral judgment, it would be hard to decide. Perhaps it is both. At any rate, the thing that fixes our eyes in this interminable procession of women. is that its glory is particularly pertinent to us women of the twentieth century, and that the elements that made it a frightful calamity to the inner girl herself are equally pat. What gives a woman power, at least that wonderful power of the spirit over those with whom she comes in contact? That is the first question to which her life gives answer. The second is: How shall a soul, truth loving, but guided by nothing more than its own unstable will,

find its haven, unless it discovers something wiser, more serene, more satisfying than its own strength? Questions, these, that we women of later days are asking ourselves.

As to the story, Julie's personal life is once again that forever fascinating one of Cinderella, the drudge raised to be a queen. Indeed, novelists have dipped into it more than once to spice their fiction. The curtain rises on the little girl, loved, but unacknowledged, daughter of the south France Countess d'Albon, who had had her baptized as the child of a couple who did not exist, giving her the name of a family estate instead of that of her unknown father. Soon she is orphaned even from her half-avowed mother. She is clever above her surroundings, she is eaten up with hunger for life, she is as sensitive as though her flesh were raw, she carries herself like a queen, but she is only a little drudge in the embattled and ramparted country chateau of her legitimate sister, now Countess de Vichy, whose husband, people whispered, was really Julie's father. One could hardly imagine a more hideously distorted way of beginning life. So Julie de Lespinasse started out with tears and passions and hatreds and loves, love particularly for the little nephew who was her charge, in the household where she was less than tolerated. What could she do to break away from it? There was no such thing as a career for an unmarried girl in those days of the eighteenth century. There was dependence or the convent. To one whose desire was furiously set on drinking the cup of experience, the convent was no solution.

Now came the fairy godmother. Madame du Deffand, a great lady from Paris, appeared on a visit to her brother, Count de Vichy. Madame du Deffand was about as wise in the ways of the world as any one could be—not too virtuous a fairy godmother. She was singularly fascinated by this maiden of brains and poise and sorrow, this plain unhappy girl with the oval face and the black eyes. More-

over, she had a problem of her own back there in the social world of the gay city. She was growing blind, and this filled her with fear lest she know some lonely hours, she who had always lived in the thick of things and held dominion in the world of fashion and wit. So, after much family agitation as to whether, if Julie got away into the gay set she might not be wanting to demand recognition and perhaps—worst of all—money, of which there was little, the young Cinderella was allowed to go away with the great lady and to become an inhabitant of the curious Paris ménage, brilliant, speculating, selfish and fascinating, drifting now toward the revolution that the very people who talked it did not dream would come. Madame du Deffand lived in the kind of a place that we Americans today love to ferret out, a sprawling convent built by the most lovely of mistresses of the most pompous of kings, who had a kind of theory that she could outwit heaven's judgment by founding such an establishment, and by spending a few weeks now and then in holy surroundings. So there was a little apartment, set in, as it were, to convent grounds, with its separate entrance crowned by the arms of Madame de Montespan, and with portraits of that famous beauty still left in its salon. Here one could live in a respectable atmosphere at small rent and do with fewer servants than the gay world usually expected. Those circumstances suited Madame du Deffand's slender purse and social genius. Julie was introduced at last to one of the greatest of the famous salons of France.

This fairy godmother was really a person of magic power. One has to admit and wonder at her without being wholly able to explain it even to this day, the power of charm and dominion and brilliance that held the rest of the world spellbound. Madame du Deffand was cynical, old, unhappy, atheistical. In spite of the fact that she was a worldling, she believed no more in people than she did in

God. But she had the supreme genius, the genius of making people interested and interesting. That was the heart of the salon. If you could do that, nothing else weighed against you. Wit matched to the subtlest reading of human weaknesses and human excellences and human sympathies turned the trick. Madame du Deffand might be, and was, "a woman with a past." She had early separated from her husband just because he bored her. Once she tried taking him back for six weeks, when he came dutifully at her summons, but the boredom was too dreadful. Now she was running her own life, with the special assistance of President Hénault, perhaps the most distinguished man of his little day, a man with all gifts that made for success. Madame spent her days in bed and her nights either at court or at the opera, or receiving under her own roof. The most brilliant of the world came in flocks, and by her wit she made them her slaves. Every other word was a bon-mot that tomorrow would be reported all over Paris. "Europe a three-fold circle round her chair," said the Abbé Delille. So, from her chair, a kind of throne placed on one side of the fireplace, the pale little lady with white hair and a big head, led the clever conversation in which all things under the sun were discussed. All the world was there, and she, ill and old, yet, "her spirits gallop faster than anybody's and so do her repartees," said Horace Walpole. And the list of her constant visitors that were now training Julie reads like a roster of the great folks of the day, some of them great folks of all time. From all over Europe, from England, Germany, Italy, Spain, Austria, came the illustrious and the high-born to bow before her. Horace Walpole, the famous Englishman, was her particular, and his letters are full of her. Her suppers were all Madame du Deffand had to live for. "They are one of the four ends of creation," she said, "but I have forgotten the other three."

There was Voltaire, the greatest cynic of history, engaged in his fulminations against monarchs and aristocracies, and yet toadying to them—for no one imagined that the order of the world was going to be changed soon and that these words were going to be an impelling force in that change. He was almost a devotee of du Deffand. Yet even he was not enough of a disbeliever to suit some of them. "He is a bigot," said one great lady. "He believes in God." There was Hénault, distinguished historian; there was Montesquieu, discusser of all social affairs; there was Jean Jacques Rousseau, as impassioned a philosopher as Voltaire was cold; there were cardinals and duchesses, and most dear of all to the old lady there was d'Alembert, the fascinator, a great geometrician, to be sure, but also a witty man and a mimic who could set everybody laughing at every one else, adored of all Paris, though he had been almost picked out of an ash can, being, like our Julie, nameless in the real sense.

Extraordinarily the young drudge, "formed by misfortune" and brought out of her corner in a country chateau, fitted in to this glittering panorama of the typical aristocrat of that keen-minded, corrupt, disbelieving day. Almost instantly she became, in spite of her lack of beauty, the focus of interest. "I have seen faces moved by passion, pleasure, high spirits, or sorrow. But of what a thousand shades was I ignorant until we met," said Count de Guibert.

A girl with a purity that was like a flame, a being sensitive to the point of intensity, was this Julie. "The quickest brain, most passionate soul, and inflammable imagination allied," said Marmontel. Where Madame du Deffand was false and self-centered, Julie was intensely truthful. Where the old woman was bored and despised all the human race, even these whom, because she had nothing else in her life, she fascinated night after night, the little

maid from the country idealized people until their failure to be perfect ate into her being. Julie was accumulating friends among the great. She loved to charm, and her brilliance was so simply natural, her mind so set on others beside herself, she was so lovable without being coquettish in the least, that she became a "magician" for attracting people. Certainly a curious combination these two who rode on the crest of the wave together year after year.

The story of the final break between the old aristocrat and the waif is another of the episodes that have been caught by the novelist. Julie, whose room was on another floor from Madame's, used to be out of bed before six o'clock at night. Some of the great men began to come an hour or two before the great salon began, just for the pleasure of sitting around Julie's fire and talking life over with her. Of course, just as it would happen in a play, there came a night when the old woman came in on them. She was furious at this treasonable underhand snake-in-the-grass invasion of her own supremacy. There were tears and recriminations, and words that could never be forgotten, and, of a sudden, the years she had spent in the little apartment of her benefactor seemed to Julie a long abasement of her spirit in the humiliation of a dependent. Madame du Deffand threw her out, as she supposed, on the street. But now something unexpected happened. All Paris rallied to the support of the outcast. She was poor. Then annuities must be procured for her; here, there, everywhere, even one from the King's private treasury, engineered by the Great Duc de Choiseul. Madame Geoffrin, the other supreme salonière of Paris, no great friend of du Deffand, sold some famous paintings to the empress of Russia and devoted the money to helping Julie furnish her rooms and to settling a pension on her. Worst of all, the thing that completed the tragedy of Madame's life, her be-

loved d'Alembert, the only being that she really loved without reserve, when he must make his choice, chose Julie, and when she set herself up in a little two-flight apartment over a joiner's shop, went to live in her attic rooms and to take his meals with her for the remaining sixteen years of her life, in one of the most extraordinary friendships of history, apparently a passionate love on his part, and on hers only a satisfying comradeship, that the world accepted with no imputation of disgrace. "The tie between us is neither love nor marriage, but very charming friendship," Julie wrote. The greatest mathematician, the expert in chemistry and medicine, the wit that enchanted society, ran her little errands, nursed her through smallpox, became her humble dog. Frederick the Great of Prussia, who divided public adulation with Voltaire, was to offer him a position at court, with a salary of twelve thousand crowns. Catherine the Great of Russia tried to steal him with a lure of a hundred thousand pounds, but he would not leave Julie. The highest honor that his country could offer a man of brains, the perpetual secretaryship of the Académie Française, with a kind of kingly dominion over that little empire of the intellectuals, became his; but, while he took the position, he declined to move away from Julie's upper rooms into the more stately apartments that went with the office.

Madame Geoffrin, who began her protection of Julie more out of spite against Madame du Deffand than for any love of the girl herself, soon became the most devoted of her friends. Twice a day, d'Alembert and Julie were in the habit of going to the great lady's house. Soon Julie was deciding who could, and who could not, be permitted to enter the select salon of this very rich salonière, who was one of three great ladies to hold dominion over Paris, du Deffand and Necker being the others, one by wit, one by political prestige, but Geoffrin by a kind of bourgeois

kindliness and honesty and way of making people feel much at home.

But the once waif was not content to be a hanger-on at another's salon. She wanted one of her own, "altar against altar." Was there ever a more complete triumph? All Madame du Deffand's old glorious train, with the exception of Walpole was climbing Julie's narrow wooden stairway. Her little income that amounted to about two thousand dollars, did not permit her to give the gay world the suppers to which it was accustomed. But that made no difference. Julie was there, and d'Alembert, the genius and the wit, was there, and one could meet him nowhere else in Paris. Duchesses and statesmen, literary lights and outstanding visitors from other lands, made much of in Paris, came to the little typically French room with its white woodwork and its red damask draperies and its sofas and chairs so arranged as to make conversation, the most brilliant of conversations, "the highest of all arts," easy. Here you might meet the great historian Hume from England, after whom all Paris was running. "My food here is ambrosia. I breathe incense and tread flowers," he said. Here were the slovenly Rousseau and the dandified Neapolitan Ambassador, Caroccioli. Here were the illustrious Turgot and Condorcet, the great mathematician. Here was Lord Shelburne talking to the Duchess of Luynes or her Grace of Chatillon. Sometimes they laughed and played. Sometimes the talk rose to solemnity and dealt with great affairs. But the center of it all was the woman. "Queen of Paris," she was called. No one even wanted to dispute her reign, for they loved her as well as haunted her. What was the genius that made the miracle possible? Nothing but a kind of crystalline honesty of mind combined with a true will to make other people happy and at peace. She moved among her throng of guests, setting every one at ease. She was better than balls and the opera.

"Soul and charm" were the elements of her alembic. "A single adroit word from her," said the great Grimm, one of her visitors, "gave new life to conversation, sustained it or turned it as she pleased. No subject seemed without interest to her and there was none in which she could not interest others. Her genius seemed omnipresent."

This was the outer world of our Julie. Inside the demons were tearing her. What was all this glitter and glory without love? And she was capable of love, a love far beyond the intrigues and coquetry that played around her. Among her visitors came a young Spanish nobleman, one of Paris' darlings, Marquis de Mora, far younger than this plain woman now becoming middle-aged. Again nothing but her genius mattered between them. "We often see him in adoration before her," said another man. "You seem to have a right over every motion and every feeling of my soul. I owe you account of every thought, nor does a thought seem mine until the sharing of it with you has won me a right therein," she wrote to him. But the family of Spanish grandees did not fancy the idea of marriage between its heir and a Julie de Lespinasse, for with all her charms she was a nobody by birth, and getting on in life. By every pretext, military service, domestic tyranny, health—for the poor lad was spitting blood—they got him away from Paris. Letters of stormy love passed back and forth. But meanwhile Julie had a terrible change of heart, a change that Paris and even her constant friend who saw her day by day, never suspected. She fell even more in love with another man. Count de Guibert was taking Paris by storm. He had written a book on military tactics that was later carried about by Napoleon. He was a brilliant soldier. He was the most fascinating of talkers and companions. This love, expressed in letters that the often-bored Guibert kept, has classed Julie among the great lovers of the world. Probably no other woman ever poured

herself out so marvellously and so fully. "The loudest heart-beats" they have been called, these tortured flaming letters. De Mora died without coming back to her and she felt herself a traitor in secret. Guibert, sometimes weary of the intensity and abandon that Julie's utter frankness made no effect to hide, slipped away and married a pretty, rich, young, serene, nobly-born girl. But he could not resist creeping now and again to Julie's door, all the more fascinated by her because she would permit no familiarity but maintained dear friendliness. But she grew bored by the brilliant company that once had satisfied her.

"The collection and assortment which has peopled hell and small houses for a thousand centuries filled my rooms last evening. Surrounded by all these prigs, blockheads, pedants, fools and abominable persons with whom I have spent my day, I thought only of you and your follies," she once wrote Guibert. At the same time, her keen mind measured and told him the truth about a play that he read before the queen and about which fashionable Paris raved. She said he had done slovenly work and begged him not to let it come before a public audience. And the event proved her judgment good.

She was sinking down into a limbo, her body torn by her use of opium, her spirit distorted by the agony of life. One day she died. D'Alembert discovered with amazement that his constant friend of years had loved another man. "If she had died sixteen years before, I should have kept d'Alembert," grumbled her old friend, Madame du Deffand. And thirty years after her death, Madame Guibert published Julie's letters to the Count, and all Paris was again in a state of excitement over the revelation of emotion to its astonished and avid eyes. "Her letters are, in my opinion, the truest picture of deep passion ever traced by a human being," said Mackintosh. And the tale is told

that another woman, and that the most illustrious of her day, Madame de Staël, held a group of people entranced through several hours of rain and hail and thunder by discoursing on the astonishing love letters of the long dead Julie de Lespinasse, poor Julie, whose triumphs were of the outer world, and whose sorrow was of the very fountains of her being.

The salon shows us things in us that we only half suspect, that few of us have the ability to bring to fruition. These salons were not the mere pleasant diversion of an idle evening. "They became a great flexible organization as changing as the sea, but as irresistible in their rising tide of power." They controlled society and society ruled France. They made the reputations of statesmen and literary men and artists. If a man secured the favor of the salonières, he rose to the top. When they tired of him, he fell. Said Montesquieu, who lived in the midst of their heyday, "They form a republic, whose members, always active, aid and serve one another. *Whoever observes the activities of those in power, if he does not know the women who govern them, is like one who watches a machine but does not know its secret springs.*" This was really the most powerful group of women the earth has ever seen, in spite of our modern satisfaction with our education, our freedom and our political position. And except in the matter of bringing babies into the world, this was the first wholly feminine big success in the world. No man could do it. It required the delicacy of touch, the subtle instinct for understanding men in all their frailties as well as in their exaltations, that belonged to women who had been studying humans individually since the world began. And along with this was a new technique, entirely feminine, in managing the conduct of humans. "No, madame," said a rather heavy abbé to Madame Geoffrin, when she congratulated him on his cleverness, "I am not an interesting man.

I am only the instrument on which you have played."

Once a man tried to establish a salon. Lord Bolingbroke came over from England to Paris with all his prestige and wealth, but a conspiracy of silence on the part of the women who knew the salon job dampened the whole thing, and for some unpublished reason the government suppressed Bolingbroke's parties. One can imagine the sly amused glances that women interchanged. They knew why. Some of them at that very time were running salons infinitely more menacing, politically, to the powers that sat in high places—gatherings where the radicalism that was to flower into the glory of the American Revolution and the tragic success of the French Revolution got its first hearing.

A wholly feminine affair and built up into its enormous effectiveness by qualities wholly womanly, but curiously, not by those characteristics that we are accustomed to cry aloud as feminine. Youth did not count; in fact, no young woman could swing so complicated a thing; nor did beauty, or wealth, or the wiles of coquetry.

So none of the ancient famous stock in trade of feminine conquest, namely sex and body lure, was essential. The sway of the salons that stretches from Henry IV to the French Revolution was based on exquisite understanding of what moves human thoughts and acts and affections and ambitions. The intaking and the outgoing of such forces may be used sometimes for our own delectation, and sometimes for other peoples' purposes. Salonières were not profound, but they were uncannily clever. Good or bad, they had such power of playing up themselves and of playing up men as makes all other than French women seem to French men, even to this day, only half developed, and they used this ability not so often to push themselves as to push men. But "it is not sufficient to be wise. One must also please," said Ninon. They were wise as ser-

pents and though by no means as harmless as doves, yet as soft-voiced as doves.

Talleyrand said no one knew how delightful life could be who had not lived in France before the Revolution. The charm of it was the daily titillation of the salons, good company, brilliant wit, the constant explosion of new ideas, smiles and gossip, and sudden silences of deep emotion either of the spirit or of personal experience. And they owned the world. No one else counted. They were "tout le monde." And all the time revolution that was to sweep them all into the dust heap was gathering, fostered by their own radical recklessness, by their playing with truth and honor, by their self-indulgence and arrogance.

Chapter XI

DAUGHTERS OF UNREST

THE women of the salons had been talking liberty and "the masses" and human nature, but it was mostly talk, delightful, stimulating, suggestive talk among well-born people. Voltaire was vastly pleased to be visited by persons of importance and even Rousseau could not imagine a world according to his theories. But all these people were a kind of crest, a snowy, showy crest of that real wave which was urged upward not by intellectual titillation, but by tragedy and wrong and a dim sense of their own power. In America it was to take its own peculiar form. We shall catch a glimpse of that heroism a little later, the cropping out of freedom in religious thought, in political agitation, all speaking forth, yet biding their real time until women had fought out, side by side with their men, the pressing and immediate battle of conquering a wilderness continent.

Meanwhile Revolution brooding on the horizon of Europe, was breeding women to its liking.

One sometimes thinks of Madame de Staël as the first modern woman. One does not have to explain her. She is thoroughly understandable today. She gathered up the women that went before and embodied them all, but she is a link between the old and the utterly different conditions that the French Revolution ended and began.

A "smart" little girl, Anne Louise Germaine Necker, precocious and liking to show off in the drawing rooms of her father, the great Minister of Finance to King Louis XVI, that poor, stupid king who was to lose his head and

his kingdom in a few years. She used her glowing dark eyes to effect and wrote romances and tragedies and essays while still in short skirts (in days when such were the sign of youth) because the gift was in her, not because she knew anything of life in those childish times; and when she was twenty she married after the businesslike way of her days, the Ambassador from Sweden to the Court of France, Baron of Staël-Holstein, a very handsome man, but quite pompous and unelectric, who bored her sadly. She was lucky enough, however, to be able to escape from France at the time when the storm broke and many of her friends were having their heads tumbled off by the guillotine. She was listening afar to the stories of great ladies, going haughtily to death, or to the last cry of Madame Roland, or thrilling to Charlotte Corday's heroic self-obliteration. The years were supplying her with very real material for literary efforts. Back to Paris, which she loved with a passion all French, she came after the bloody days for a little of the old social success, and she even dared to write a defense of the recently decapitated Queen Marie Antoinette. Moreover, she quarreled with Napoleon, than which nothing could have been more injudicious, if one wanted to stay in France, nay, if one wanted to stay on the face of the earth. Curiously, the all-conquering was afraid of her. She had a terrible wit and a terrible vogue, and she despised him. "She had shafts that would hit a man even though he sat on a rainbow," he complained. All he could do was to banish her from the Paris she loved and then surround her with spies wherever she went, make her daily life forever uncertain and uncomfortable by his small persecutions, and to torment himself by reports of her clever and widely quoted sayings about his majesty. She had a villa over the borders of Switzerland, as near to Paris as she dared stay, and hither came every one who was clever, and every one who plotted against Napoleon.

She was in view of the beauties of Lake Geneva and Mount Blanc. But what cared she for scenery. One interesting man was worth more to her than the whole of out-of-doors. Mountains were "a magnificent horror." Nature was "infernal peace." She was true Parisienne. "I would not open my window to see the Bay of Naples, but I would travel five hundred leagues to talk with a clever man whom I have not met."

All over Europe her fame spread, and every brilliant man of every land was eager to meet her, this omen of a new kind of women, but, once met, they were often as anxious to get away, for there was a devouring curiosity in her about the things that were in the secret places of human beings. "It is as though I were relieved of a malady," Schiller said when she went away.

Her novels, *Delphine* and *Corinne*, became the forerunners of the new romantic school. One read them. Everyone read them. *Corinne* portrayed the life of a woman of genius, a flame of a woman, such a one as herself, devoured by her combination of intellectual appetite, her everlasting need for an audience, an ever greater and greater audience as she grew more conscious of her powers, combined with the eternal feminine in her that hungered always for emotion and for love. No one had affections more passionate. No one was more prismatic in her scintillation. All thought and feeling poured from her mouth and held the most brilliant men of her day spellbound. With these qualities, she could hardly be expected to be a deep thinker. Indeed, she never lived long enough alone to do much thinking. But she could reflect every thing that others thought in a little brighter colors than they had given it. Italy saw her, and Germany. In fact, her book about Germany, *De l'Allemagne* has been called the most extraordinary portrayal in existence of one country by a native of another. It was the unconquerable romance

in her that led her to marry a second time, a man far younger than herself, a union not much happier than that with conventional old de Staël. Then came the end of Napoleon. Tired, half-sick, famous, she crept back to Paris for her old age, again to find her roof sheltering every celebrity of her day, eager to hear her bon-mot and pay court to her as in the days long past. She was always a flame until she was finally put out—this curiously absorbing woman, never beautiful, shabby and careless in dress, abrupt in manner.

"I have loved God, my father, and liberty," she said at the end, when she spoke the simplest truth about herself. One of those German women whom Madame de Staël had met described certain deep-lying kinds of affections as "fiber loves"—the emotions that are wrought into our being. Madame de Staël had such loves.

Yet it is easy to sympathize with Schiller about Germaine de Staël. There is no side-stepping her, she shines so brilliantly, even obtrusively in her own days, yet it is impossible to feel any affection for her as one does for many a lesser woman. She is all glitter and hunger. She does not give, but demands. Yet no one can escape her.

Behind her in the days of her wandering and her exile, all exquisite old France, the France of Rambouillet and Julie, was burning up. Howling mobs possessed the earth. They looked like apes and baboons to the aristocrat, as ugly, as foul-smelling, as senseless. Palaces and chateaux crumbled before them, pictures were torn to pieces, gardens were trampled into mud, heads fell like hailstones, and the screams of their victims were drowned out by their louder yells.

Other women there were, stepping beyond the light delight of the salon with its gay irresponsible discussions into the realm of constructive thinking and accomplishment,

education, art, science. One likes to meet a few of them. They do not shriek for recognition, but they win it.

There is Stephanie de Genlis, Comtesse, who became a governess to daughters in the semi-royal house of the Duchess of Chartres, and to whom there began to come upsetting new ideas on the business of teaching. Why leave it a mere imparting of proper instruction to well-born young ladies? Why not work out ways by which the lives of men and the world that lay about them might penetrate their imagination and delight their souls—not just the hang-over of the Middle Ages gilded around the edge with social graces. It worked so marvelously with girls that it was decided to give boys the benefit of it, strange as it seemed to put young noblemen in the charge of a governess. Madame de Genlis took her pupils on country walks and taught them about the flowers that they passed; she had pictures made for the elementary "magic lantern" of her day, to show them through their eyes the men and the doings of history: she wrote little plays that put drama into pedagogics. Many there have been to push along these new paths, from Pestalozzi to Horace Mann, to all modern movements. But Stephanie de Genlis was one who stepped out from the beaten track. And later she was to watch one of the boys who learned from her seated on the throne of France, Louis Philippe Egalité. Of course so clever a lady could hardly escape the infection of her time, which was writing romances and novels. If you would see the wits and philosophers of the eighteenth century somewhat acidly painted, you may read *Baron d'Holbach's Dinners*. And the Emperor Napoleon, instead of turning Stephanie de Genlis away from the borders of France—for he abominated women of brains—actually gave her a pension. So she lived through the end of the old monarchy, through the terror from which she also fled to Switzerland (that land of decency and peace through

all upheavals of mad Europe) through Napoleon and his Empire, even to see her young Duc de Chartres on a throne, but not to see him toppled off it.

There was also, watching all this time that was like volcanic upheaval, Marie Le Brun, no delicate female dilettante of a painter of garlands on book pages, but an artist of consequence. Whether we remember her name or not, we all know the reproductions of her paintings—the famous Lady Hamilton as a Bacchante, Madame de Staël as her own heroine Corinne—the standard portrait of that celebrity. Lord Byron she painted, and the Prince of Wales and a hundred others of the great people of her day, this favorite of Queen Marie Antoinette, who was to die while Marie Le Brun lived on and painted for eighty years of well-established success. A member of the Academy they made her. That was a terrible mistake made in emotional stress. It admitted that women might paint along with men. The Academy must not do that again. Down with females! But of course Marie Le Brun *could* paint, and her work endures to this day.

Madame de Staël had visited Germany, and in truth introduced it to the glittering world of France. She "discovered" it. This was one of those dramatic periods when ideas flowered in the heavens, like meteors, shooting stars. Everyone who was anyone gazed entranced at ideas. There was a certain solidity to Germany's meteors. Goethe, Schiller, Mendelssohn, Schubert and their company proved more than shooting stars in the constellations. So out of Germany came one of the first really distinguished women of science, spiritual ancestress to Maria Mitchell of our own land, of Madame Curie of France. Caroline Herschel, to be sure, did her life work with her great brother in England. George III, who had little mind for scanning the political heavens in America, made Sir William court astronomer for inspecting more distant skies, and little did

Sir William or his sister Caroline care for happenings nearer than the stars many millions of miles away from George Washington and his Revolution. Caroline did grubby work, long intricate mathematical calculations such as astronomers love, but she also discovered at least five comets, and made her own original observations on nebulæ and star-clusters. She was an authentic scientific light, as one may be who discovers anything from lichens that grow on ash heaps up to unbelievably remote planets or radio-forces that play through them all. Caroline was recognized. The Royal Astronomical Society made her honorary member ("Honorary" means, "You are really a remarkable person. We will give you everything except real, honest-to-goodness recognition"). And they also presented her with their gold medal before she went back to her good old Germany to spend an honorable age that lasted close to a hundred years.

Just a glimpse of L'Allemagne in the days of the great French woman. The new woman was appearing there also, and the salon after its kind. It is significant that the outstanding salonières of Germany were not, like most of France, usually of aristocratic blood. Free cities in the Fatherland had kept their independence of lord and of king through centuries. They bred free and untrammeled thinking, and the first women to step out of old conventions were of the burgher class. More, some of them were Jewesses, born in the huddled part of the city where prejudice and persecutions had crowded them, and where they had developed a more colorful life than their persecutors, so interesting a society, indeed, and so luxurious in its setting, touched with Orientalism, that the young men must perforce find the way into the Jewish quarter to share in it.

Henrietta Herz, beautiful young Jewess, adoring daughter of a handsome and clever physician, created such a cen-

ter. So lovely was she, that many wooers came, but they came after the manner of their conservative race—through her father. One evening, her father said to her, quite casually, "My child, which would you rather marry, a rabbi or a doctor?" A pause. Father was a doctor. So she said, naturally, "A doctor." The matter was settled and her betrothal took place that evening to the homely little man whom she hardly knew. Henrietta wore a big black hat and a dress of striped green and white silk. Somehow this story reveals so much that it is worth the telling; it shows what marriage meant to a maiden who had the mind of leadership in her. But the inconspicuous Dr. Herz had a love for society and he saw the possibilities in his very young wife. Soon the marked men of the brilliant literary age of Germany were bowing their way into Frau Herz's salon: Fichte, Schlegel, Schleiermacher, Humboldt, Richter, Mendelssohn. (The Mendelssohns gave teas too, but they were poor and they counted the raisins and almonds, so many to each guest, with true German combination of hospitality and frugality.) The fame of the beauty of Henrietta spread over Europe, for every man who visited her became an advertising agent. Portraits of her, dark-eyed, delicate of feature, brilliant of color, ringleted and smiling, multiplied. The Greek tragedians had an uncomfortable way of reminding their audiences that vicissitudes were lying in wait even for the great, and no man must be counted happy until you could see his life whole. So to Henrietta Herz came days of private revolution as well as those exceedingly turbulent years of Napoleon when no man's feet stood secure in all Europe. She found herself a widow and very poor. She was glad to be taken as a governess into the household of the Duchess of Courland. Beauty and wit pushed her up from mere dependency, and here again she met Schiller and the big-wigs of the day, even to Madame de Staël, who was greatly

amazed at finding these Germans, whom she had vaguely despised, a remarkable and intellectual people after all.

"I would not mind wearing a dog collar inscribed, 'I belong to Frau Verhagen,' " said Heine about another German Jewess, and Jean Paul Richter called her the "winged one." Rahel had grown up in the household of a father so untamed that in these days he would be said to have "temper tantrums." The child found her way to an empty attic, there to read and read and read, particularly to read Goethe, who was just illuminating the horizon, and had not yet in the eyes of the whole world outmatched all others of his day. Little Rahel recognized his genius through some kindred genius of her own. Her attic, as she grew up, became a salon. Madame de Staël was highly amused to find that there were people who coupled her name with that of Rahel. "You compare her with me? That is not bad!" she exclaimed. But of the French woman, Rahel said words more penetrating. "She has intellect enough, *but her soul never listens*." Though all the brilliant and the gay were coming to her attic, Rahel, who did not marry until late in life, found time for silence instead of crowding all her days with noise. Of one who had not learned to so adjust his life she remarked, "His mind, his soul and his heart never hold converse together, and that is the only amusing intercourse." Frau Verhagen is particularly to be noted because she began to think about a new point of view concerning women. "It is hard that in Europe men and women belong to two different classes: one moral, the other not. This can only be kept up by dissimulation. And this is chivalry!" she said, and "All mothers should be held in honor and innocent—like Mary."

Perhaps the story of his mother, Queen Luise of Prussia, was one of the moulding factors in the career of William who was to be the first Emperor of Germany as well as that of his grandson, William the Destroyer, of that em-

pire. Certainly Luise "the Good" was a daughter of unrest, and like de Staël, apparently a woman who gave Napoleon real trepidation. Life began for her on the top of the wave, in a kind of ecstasy of beauty and gayety and love, when she married the young Prince Friedrich Wilhelm of Prussia whom she adored and who adored her. The world of the Court drew on her all the time, and her husband was glad when an interval came and she could be his wife again. "Am I not always your wife?" she cried. "You have to be crown princess too often," he answered.

Then Napoleon! Napoleon was everywhere in those days, and everywhere was fear and generally defeat. Prussia was humiliated, and Luise with her husband, fugitives, sleeping in dirty peasant huts, finding their way by back roads in the hunt for safety. And the great Bonaparte, in Berlin, recognizing what a power among her people this girl had become, who never forgot anyone in need, who cared only for people and not for show and ceremony, Napoleon, the victorious, found time to issue bulletins blackening her as an intriguer, the cause of war, infamous in her private life. This attention cemented her popularity among her scattered and broken subjects. Moreover, there came a time when all Prussia felt that her personal charm and tact was all that could save them. So Napoleon and Queen Luise came together, almost alone, only Talleyrand and a waiting woman or two present, and she put forth everything that was feminine in her and every appeal to mercy. Unfortunately for Prussia, the King, her husband, walked in on the conference, and the spell was broken. Napoleon gave a sigh of relief. "Another quarter of an hour and I should have promised the Queen everything," he said, and afterward he described her as "the most admirable queen and the most interesting woman I ever met."

When he had gone to his doom, she, like Madame de Staël, crept back to her kingdom; but that of Luise was

not a salon for self-glory. Hers was to heal the bruises of her people. She was deeply interested in education, and even in the most advanced ideas of education that Pestalozzi was putting forth. Luise the Good she remained.

More tragic daughters of unrest there were, born after de Staël and Le Brun and Herschel, and dying far younger, never to see the new day, caught in the horror that the others had escaped—daughters not only of unrest but of martyrdom—never-to-be-forgotten girls who believed with heart and soul in the coming world but were to be part of the chaos of the old.

Charlotte Corday, young impassioned apostle of republicanism, dreamer of dreams, saw with staring horror the actual madness of those with whom she had identified herself; saw blood flowing as in the gutters of the Marseillaise, saw passion and cruelty and lust let loose when she had believed that a great new order was to come; bowed in anguish when her own lover was massacred by the mob. There were demons, she thought, leading men. She must get rid of the arch demon. So when Marat, craziest and most savage of all revolution leaders, pronounced the doom of two hundred thousand more, she found her way to his rooms. There were anti-revolutionist plotters back in her town of Caen, she whispered. Who were they? He began to write their names exultantly. More heads to be cut off! Within a week! Charlotte drew the knife from her bosom and thrust it into his heart. Twenty-five years old, and so delicately and exquisitely beautiful that the very animal-like wielders of the guillotine found their eyes misting before her heroic dignity. "She is greater than Brutus," cried young Lux from the crowd. Away with him too to the guillotine!

Marie, Madame Roland, too, was a dreamer of the new order, but one who was extraordinarily clear of thought and eloquent of tongue and trained of mind, with all fine

scholarship. The tragedy of the poor wretches of the common people had eaten into her. She and her brave husband were of that little party of Girondists who would bring a republic but without blood and lust, as obnoxious to the Marats and Robespierres as any aristocrat of them all. They possessed reason and self-control,—intolerable qualities. Into prison went both husband and wife, and the fury of the mob against such as they grew to white heat when Marat fell under Corday's knife. It was a little mockery of a trial that Marie Jeanne Roland received—one of those trials where the verdict precedes the evidence, and she too was hurried to the dropping knife, undaunted as the men who had gone before her, to utter as her last words one of those sentences that has become immortal: "O Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!" M. Roland did not wait for execution after news came to his prison of his wife's death, but killed himself.

One more—whose lovely picture hangs in cheap print all up and down the land—with her long grace of limb and lovely pose of head and neck and clinging half-classic garments. The Court and Marie Antoinette had taken her girlhood to itself and parental authority married her at fifteen to Monsieur Récamier of forty-five. They were only of the banker class, Monsieur and Madame Récamier, and so escaped the terror by lying very quiet. But Napoleon marked her beauty and wanted her to become a Lady of Honor. Being really, inside, a lady of honor, she declined the position, and there was one more woman for Bonaparte to hate. Madame de Staël was her dear friend, and one may think of her, this lovely lady whose charm has been caught forever in her portraits, as the last of the salonières but of more serious mind, as who would not be who had lived through the tragedy of French Revolution, but still at more than sixty called the most beautiful woman of the world in her quiet home at Abbaye-aux-Bois. It was

more than beauty of the body that has kept Madame Récamier immortal, for the procession of people who did things sought her out; old Arthur, Duke of Wellington, "the Duke" who had toppled Napoleon; von Humboldt from Germany, who discovered diamonds in the Ural and played with terrestrial magnetism or igneous rocks along with Davy of England who knew about laughing gas and invented the miner's lamp; Marie Edgeworth, author of *Castle Rackrent* and *The Absentee* (clever and amusing old maid); beauty in the Duchess of Devonshire; most beloved of her friends, Châteaubriand who wrote of prairie and Indian of wild America. "France can never forget her," said Sainte-Beuve. The world does not forget the last of those Frenchwomen in whom all lure, all wit, all beauty, mind illuminated, seem to be embodied as a sample for other women.

Chapter XII

FEMALES AND BLUESTOCKINGS

THE first view of English women is like bringing the more remote European lands into a "close up," for in the making of the men and women of that island from which our home country was to receive its original impetus, there had been successive waves of those other peoples. Over Britain had poured Roman, leaving a deposit of his law and his language and that of Greece that had helped make him; over Roman had poured Dane and Saxon and Angle, depositing a far more essential part of us; over these conquering tribes flowed the Norman to vivify all else with his Germanic strength and his French swift brilliance. All European culture seeped from south to north; therefore, at last, it came to Britain, to fashion that far-away and once lightly considered group of islands. Women of Greece and Rome, women of Renaissance and salon belong to us. They are woven into the "fiber love" of our race.

To be sure, there was a group of half legendary women that were entirely British, Boadicea, warrior queen, Guinevere and wily Vivian and fair Elaine. And there were women playing great parts in the conversion to Christianity and the establishment of this and that royal line. But just as from Chaucer down to Shakespeare, Britain took its stories and formed its manners on those of the south, so were its women influenced by the ways and thoughts of "romance" lands. A great lady of England was hungry to know how Isabella d'Este cut her sleeves, and eager to find out what dishes were cooked for a feast in Paris.

A robust time for women was that of the Tudors. No mere playthings, no negative persons, no brainless reflections of dominant man were the women Shakespeare saw around him, or he would not have created a Portia or a Beatrice (though, to be sure, never a woman played a woman's part on the stage of his day). Probably we can hardly overestimate what it has meant to our national tradition that the greatest of our dramatists saw for himself that powerful, self-willed, wily, wise, old, red-headed Queen Bess ruling his land. In her day, he would be a foolish courtier who dared question feminine abilities. For over three hundred years, the English speaking race, yes, and the continent also, has delighted in these alluring witty and strong women. They made no plea for their own sex. They did not need to. It was enough for them to be—Rosalind or Olivia or Catherine. It would be hard to outmatch them in brains or in individuality. And one would go far before finding women more feminine.

Catherine, daughter of Queen Isabella of Spain (to whom Columbus and America make obeisance), brought to England a tradition of well-trained womanhood, and she had scholars from the south to educate her daughter, little Princess Mary. Thrown from her queenhood by the king, and kept all the rest of her life under a small constant nagging persecution, nevertheless she maintained a heroic will and all the dignity of a queen.

"Little girls should learn Latin. It completes their charm," said Cardinal Bembo. And the little girls of Tudor England completed their charm. Maidens should be good, but learning will help them to be moral. Yes, of course, wool and flax and the arts of the medicine and of the kitchen belong to feminine education. The great Sir Thomas More did not see why learning was not as suitable for women as for men, and he practiced what he preached, giving his daughters all the scholarly training

of his time, and glorying in the most brilliant of them all, Margaret, who in her turn brought up her children as well educated specimens of womanhood.

Anne, wife of Sir Nicholas Bacon and mother of the immortal Francis, Lord Bacon (whether he wrote Shakespeare or not), was like many another mother of great men, herself a distinguished scholar. One of her achievements was the translation from Latin into English of a much-talked-of *Apology for the Church of England.* When she sent this version to its author, Bishop Jewel, with a note in Greek, asking him to comment on her work, he pronounced it perfect. Lady Jane Gray, tragic and beautiful, read Plato with "delite" when she was thirteen; and fairest of all was Mary Sidney, sister of Sir Philip, of whom rare old Ben Jonson wrote the famous epitaph in glorification of her character, her beauty, and her scholarship.

"Under this sable hearse
Lies the subject of all verse—
Sydney's sister, Pembroke's mother.
Death when thou hast slain another
Learned and fair and wise as she,
Time shall throw a dart at thee."

The woman of character and training became so much of a phenomenon that Erasmus, witty old scholar, made his *Learned Lady* say to the churchman, "If you do not take care, it will soon come to this, that we shall preside in your schools of divinity, preach in your churches and take possession of your mitres."

With the passing of Elizabeth, most illustrious of queens, most domineering and inflexible of women, came an abrupt tumble in the acceptable model of womanhood. The court of the Stuarts specialied in professional beauties, and the Puritan was no promoter of the feminine.

He was of the type of man who keeps Eve ever to the front.

Soon women became "females," reduced to classification with all other young-bearing animals, cows, dogs and elephants. There were, to be sure, elegant females, shameless females, unfortunate females, pert females, and females of delicate sensibility.

While Mme. de Staël and Rahel Verhagen were playing their parts, England put forth her properly educated youthful female. "In music, in dancing, in orthography, in every variety of embroidery and needlework, she will be found to have realized her friend's fondest wishes. In Geography, there is still much to be desired; and a careful and undeviating use of the backboard for four hours daily during the next three years is recommended as necessary to the acquirement of that dignified deportment and carriage so requisite for a young lady of fashion. In the principles of religion and morality, Miss Sedley will be found worthy," so says Thackeray.

This was the time when young females languished their way through romance and play, pursued by alluring villains and rescued by still more magnificent stalking heroes. The ladies cast their weeping eyes to heaven; heroes threw themselves at their feet in an ecstasy of passion and exclaimed, "Most admirable Miss Beverly!" Like Alice, the ideal female "wept with delight if you gave her a smile, and trembled with fear at your frown."

Grandiloquent chivalry was rather a superficial thing. It easily ran side by side with unclean minds and with tales and plays that turned on gross plots and plottings. Perhaps any decent woman was obliged to lay down a barrage of "delicate sensibilities" behind which she found it possible to live. Masculine fops were developed to their highest power and formulated the laws for elegant society. There are bits like these rules of Beau Nash, according to

which aristocratic society should conduct itself in the resort of Bath: "That a visit of ceremony at coming to Bath and another at going away is all that is expected or desired by Ladies of Quality and Fashion—except impertinents. That Gentlemen of Fashion never appearing in a morning before the Ladies in Gowns and Caps show Breeding and Respect. That Gentlemen crowding before the Ladies at the Ball show ill manners, and that none do so in Future—except such as respect nobody but themselves" —all of which may be excellent in manners, though it remains perplexing as to grammar.

Nor did high-flown chivalry exercise any great influence on law, which was brutally cruel to women,—at least to the married woman, who, in fact, did not exist before the law, being but a shadow of her husband. In the matter of inheritance, all males in any line inherited before any females. What Mr. Samuel Weller calls "the amiable weakness" of wife-beating was almost as well established under the law as the British Constitution. By marrying, a girl gave not only herself but everything she owned to the husband. The "age of consent" down to 1885 was ten or twelve. The attitude of mind of all the age of "females" may well be expressed by a "lady of distinction" who wrote as late as 1821, "When your temper and your thoughts are formed upon those of your husband, you will perceive that you have no will, no pleasure but what is also his. This is the character the wife of prudence would be apt to assume; she would make herself the mirror to show unaltered and without aggravation, diminution, or distortion, the thoughts, the sentiments and the resolutions of her husband. She would have no particular design, no opinion, no thought, no passion, no approbation, no dislike, but what would be conformable to his judgment. I would have her judgment seem the reflecting mirror to his determination; and her form the shadow of his body,

conforming itself to his several positions and following it in all its movements."

As was the graceful self-obliteration of a lady of distinction, so, more domineeringly, was custom, and so, still more harshly, was the law. The elegant female was as modest as her own underpinning in the days when

> "Her feet beneath her petticoat
> Like little mice stole in and out,
> As though they feared the light."

Occasionally a shy little brain also peeped out and hastily retreated. Or the female returned the sentimental compliment of the male as when Mrs. Haywood wrote *The Wild Career of Untamed Love in the Proud Heart of Arbitrary Man.* One would like to own that volume!

Meanwhile, across the channel were French salons! English women have in them some of John Bull. It may be a little burdened with inertia, but once started it is likely to keep going.

There came the days of the great Dr. Johnson. It is a little difficult now to say why he was so great, a scrofulous lump of a man. But doubtless, the reign of good Queen Anne was as easily victimized as other times by a loud voice and a persistent and insistent claim of superiority. One visualizes him sitting ponderously in his chair and issuing his ultimatum on every subject that came into discussion, with a true lexicographer's scintillation, while surrounding him was an adoring circle of ladies of distinction, Mrs. Thrale, Mrs. Chapone, Mrs. Montagu, and the ever-present Boswell, all gathering, as in a silver vase, each dictatorial sentence as it fell. Conversations went on and on, and were fondly reported. It was in Mrs. Montagu's home on Cherry Hill that the word "bluestocking" is said to have come into vogue, in remembrance of a Mr. Stilling-

fleet, who attended the salons in hose of that color. Men there were too in the "swell-cultured set," men like Sir Joshua Reynolds, Burke, Lord Luddington, and among others Dr. Burney, a musician, and a most popular man, whose parlors were crowded day after day. A drab little girl watched them from a corner. Says Lord Macaulay, "Hundreds of remarkable persons had passed in review before her, English, French, German, Italian, lords and fiddlers, deans of cathedrals and managers of theatres." Hardly one of them even noticed Fanny. But she began to tell herself a story and to write down the way this panorama of the world looked to a young girl. Might she publish it? She asked her father. He choked and laughed and kissed her, and forgot. Even to herself it looked like a wildly adventurous thing of which to dream. *Evelina* went secretly and anonymously to a publisher, who later assured excited inquirers that it was "written by a gentleman at the other end of town." "Perhaps this may seem a rather bold attempt and title for a female whose knowledge of the world is rather confined," Fanny confided to her diary; and she dedicated the anonymous novel "To the Author of My Being," which was a very proper way for a female to phrase her devotion to her father. A charming little romance is this of Fanny Burney's early days, of fluttering heart and ecstasies when she drew breaths of incense all in secret. The great Mrs. Thrale was reading *Evelina* and had given a copy to the great Dr. Johnson. The great Dr. Johnson read it aloud and committed parts to memory to shout them jubilantly at his devotees—a marvelous book, an extraordinary portrayal of every kind of humans, such humor, such understanding of social life! And finally her father, the "author of her being," devoured her story greedily, and went back to pause over that dedication. To think that "our Fanny had actually given birth to this literary prodigy!" *Evelina, or A Young Lady's Entrance into the*

World, was a very literal fact, for "fine carriages, and rich liveries not often seen east of Temple Bar" crowded the doors of the small publisher. The young lady belongs, as indeed did her author, to the heroine type of the day. Taine says that they constitute a "race by themselves, soft, fair with blue eyes, lily whiteness, blushing, of timid delicacy, serious sweetness, framed to yield, bend, cling." In fact while they bent before every breeze; there was but one thing in which these heroines displayed indomitable strength, and that was in their Virtue.

Evelina was followed by *Cecilia*, hailed by its own day as a triumph even greater. Then the times did to Fanny what one might expect. They conferred a supreme favor by snatching her away from her chosen life of literature and giving her a court position, where, for her board and keep and a thousand dollars a year she had the supreme felicity of becoming a servant to an autocratic fat old queen until her health broke under mere manual labor and she had to creep out from the routine duties, a frail, worn middle-aged woman. For five weary years she had been assistant "Keeper of the Robes" to Queen Charlotte. She, as well as the society of her day, felt that this was a real achievement. She then committed the unpardonable sin of falling in love and marrying a French gentleman, an emigré from the Revolution. Henceforth even her old friends had little use for her. Poverty, hack writing, and the society of a delightful man were Fanny's last lot.

Meanwhile she had written, she, a woman, fiction that, if not wholly great, was clever and discerning and full of pictures of her world. She had broken a new trail for women. "She vindicated the right of her sex to an equal share in the fair and noble province of letters."

Crowding on Fanny's heels came a line that was to surpass her, Jane Austen, George Eliot and lesser satellites. But, to this day, one would have to be immune to things

pleasantly human if one could ignore *The Life and Letters of Mme. d'Arblay.* The tale of glory and popularity striking like lightning, always in itself alluring, becomes one of those biographies more captivating than fiction, for Fanny d'Arblay certainly "had a way with her."

Born a little after Fanny Burney d'Arblay, and dying more than forty years earlier, tragic and short of life, as may be expected of such, was a woman like a sybil, a prophetess, to whom the world of small conventionalities meant less than nothing. One can see her, Titian-red of hair, utterly careless about her appearance, dressing in shabby clothes that she might have a penny now and then to give away, wonderfully beautiful, with the face of a child, pathetic and wistful, to such as could see beyond the mere trappings, Mary Wollstonecraft was the apostle of a new order for women, and paid for it in a kind of life-long martyrdom. She was no apologetic female, but one who would tear the heavens for what she thought was right. If any woman had an excuse for being a man-hater, it was she. Her father swung from blows and cruelty into occasional caresses, but always his family was the victim of his every crotchet, and his chief caprice was the unwillingness to stay in one spot long enough to make a home. Her sister, to whom Mary gave herself in agony, went insane as a result of her marriage to a brute and a drunkard. "Poor Eliza's situation almost turns my brain," she wrote to another sister. "I can't stay and see this continual misery, and to leave her to bear it by herself without any one to comfort her is still more distressing," and again she tells of how, in a kind of fit, Eliza "bit her wedding ring to pieces." The third household with which Mary's youth was most familiar, was that of her very dear friend, Fanny Blood, whose father was a wastrel drunkard. No wonder Mary cared little whether her dress was new or her stockings delicate. The extraordinary thing is that she should

have been the woman to make a determined and eloquent plea for a higher kind of companionship between men and women. Mary Wollstonecraft was herself too much under the sway of her emotional life to underestimate it. She loved and hated. She was passionately religious, though she cared as little about religious forms as she did for social forms. A very feminine nature she had that made her cling to hope and ideals through her sodden, poverty-haunted, ugly girlhood, and that, in 1791, brought out her *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, the cry for the fulfillment of the thing to which the Middle Ages had given birth. "If women are souls, they are immortal souls. Unless they coöperate in making life better, they will act as a wall to block it." "And how can a woman be expected to coöperate unless she know why she ought to be virtuous? —unless freedom strengthen her reason till she understand her duty, and see in what manner it is connected with her real good? If children are to be educated to understand the true principle of patriotism, their mother must be a patriot; and the love of mankind, from which an orderly train of virtues springs, can only be produced by considering the moral and civil interest of mankind; but the education and situation of woman at present shuts her out from such investigations."

Not alarmingly upsetting, this doctrine, to modern ears, and rather heavy in its expression. But to the end of the eighteenth century it sounded mad and bad. Oh, yes, there were people who began to be interested in Mary Wollstonecraft. Prince Talleyrand went to visit her and drink wine out of a teacup and to find her rather slovenly but philosophical of mind. What she thought of the little people among whom her lot was cast, sometimes as a governess, sometimes seeking out a bit of an income by her pen, she tells us. "I could not lead the life they do at Eton; nothing but dress and ridicule going forward. Witlings abound

and puns fly about like crackers, though you would scarcely guess they had any meaning in them if you did not hear the noise they create." "Confined to the society of a set of silly females, I have no social converse, and their boisterous spirits and unmeaning laughter exhaust me, not forgetting hourly domestic bickerings. The topics of matrimony and dress take their turn, not in a very sentimental style—alas, poor sentiment. It has no residence here."

Mary did not fit well in her England and her England did not think well of her. She belonged in the sisterhood of Aspasia and Cornelia and Christina de Pisan and Madame de Staël.

Over to Paris and into a somewhat Bohemian society she drifted, and here at last gave plausibility to England's suspicions. She met Gilbert Imlay and loved him. Her love was a part of her like her religion and her hunger for wisdom. Imlay himself speaks of her as "Mary Imlay, my best friend and wife," in a legal document, but there was no marriage ceremony. "Ah ha," they said back home, "you see! The belief in education for women so far from building up that permanent relation between men and women that the Wollstonecraft claims is, in fact, the subtle introduction of free love."

Poor Mary did not believe in free love, but Imlay did. And she had trusted him. "I never wanted of you but your heart," she wrote him with dignity when he began to slip away. "That gone, you have nothing more to fear."

Then came William Godwin, one of the outstanding literary men of his day. "I have paid dearly for one conviction," she wrote to Imlay. "Love in some minds is an affair of sentiment. Love is a want of my heart." But Godwin's love was of the very quality of which the author of *The Vindication of the Rights of Women* had dreamed—tender and satisfying in itself, and glorified by common intellectual interest. As his wife she had a little respite after her

stormy days, until when she was thirty-eight, death came to her in the bearing of a daughter, that Mary Godwin who was to become, like her dead mother, a stormy petrel, the wife of Shelley, herself the author of *Frankenstein*, which has added a word and a figure to literature.

Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin had been a professional literary woman, writing constantly and on all kinds of public topics. The year she died, Charles Fox, magnificent orator and liberal leader, said, "It has never been suggested in all the theories of the most absurd speculation that it would be advisable to extend the elective franchise to the female sex." Dangerous business is the laying down the law with regard to what has been and what shall be. But still we persist in doing it. History seems to consist chiefly in building fences for the enclosing of the human race and then of knocking them over. Mary Wollstonecraft was one who started the toppling of fences.

Now came a host of literary women. There is the immortal Jane Austen, whose personal life was drab, but whose novels still hold her adorers almost in a cult, and whose writing was considered of so inferior importance to her truly "female" needlework that she always kept a large piece of muslin work on purpose to cover it whenever any genteel people came to call, so Harriet Martineau tells us.

One would love to linger over Harriet Martineau herself, ill, poor, crying at night over the publisher's prediction of failure for her stories, but getting up early in the morning to go on just the same. No wonder a publisher had no faith in bits of fiction based on political economy. But Harriet upset his calculations and flew into popularity with all the intelligentsia of her day. Deaf, was Harriet, and always accompanied by an ear trumpet that she swung around "as if it were an antenna" feeling its way into other people's ideas; a great talker herself, so that Sidney Smith declared he had gone through a night of dreadful dreaming

that he was tied to a post and being talked to death by Macaulay and Harriet Martineau; called an atheist also by her time because she thought of the Creator in terms of "First Cause." "There's no God, and Harriet is his prophet," Clough explained her doctrine. "A monomaniac about everything," Hartley Coleridge called her. "Yet, after all, she is a trump," exclaimed George Eliot. A very kindly, humorous, hard-working old maid, who contributed sixteen hundred articles to the Daily News alone, who visited us in the United States and wrote us up, who gathered around herself people like the Brontë sisters, Emerson, George Eliot and Douglas Jerrold.

A gentle little Quaker lady tells of seeing Harriet Martineau and Mary Somerville hobnobbing at a party—the great women of their day, marvelous superwomen, appallingly learned. If she could only hear what they were saying, it might be something to remember all her life. So she crept quietly around behind their chairs, and she heard Miss Martineau exclaim, "If I were you, my dear, I'd have it dyed black." "And I have always remembered," added the auditor.

Saving grace of feminine inconsequence! After all, there is hope that civilization may withstand the shock of women's erudition.

There is Mrs. Gaskell of blessed *Cranford* and *Wives and Daughters*. There is Mary Russell Mitford of *Rienzi* fame; and there is the fine lady authoress in Lady Blessington whose adoring husband set her like a jewel, with a bedroom where silver-carved swans supported her bed in an alcove lined with white fluted silk and blue lace, silver sofa and pale blue velvet carpet with uncut pile, marvelous caskets to hold her jewels and her India shawls, crystals and mirrors and marble bath sunk to the level of the floor. Her chariot was green, with wheels picked out with green and white and crimson, with its high-stepping horses and

its footmen, "spider-limbed, powdered," over six feet tall, so that she seemed elevated above all the rest of the crowd. Her salon was not only a place of ostentatious show but also the meeting place of all the distinguished of her day, Earl Grey and Bulwer-Lytton, the Iron Duke and Edwin Landseer, and even Napoleon himself, soon to be the master of the world but still rather an awkward and unnoticed person over in a corner. No wonder the picture of Lady Blessington by Sir Thomas Lawrence is probably as well known as any portrait in the world. No wonder she speaks of Lord Blessington as "the most gallant of all gallant husbands that it ever fell to the happy lot of woman to possess." Still, her ladyship had a fine tact that made her the only woman of her own class with whom Lord Byron (who rather specialized in shady ladies) could feel wholly at home. All kinds of things wrote Lady Blessington, conversations, keepsakes, stories, memories of her life and friendships.

And finally, among the women writers of England three names tower into the realm of real genius far above all that have gone before (except perhaps Jane Austen, whose genius was perfect so far as it went): The Brontë sisters, Elizabeth Barrett Browning and George Eliot.

If there had ever been a prophet of genius, surely he would not have fixed upon a bare rectory on bleak moors, the home of the Reverend Patrick Brontë of Irish peasant blood, and his Cornish wife of broad dialect, as its well, undefiled. Yet it must have been some magic alembic that brewed not one but three sisters who can be given no less tribute than to be called geniuses. Celtic genius, imaginative, brooding, colorful and a bit dire.

Five little girls and one little boy were left motherless in the country parsonage of Rev. Patrick Brontë. Three years after the mother's death, when Charlotte was eight and Emily six, the girls were shipped off to a school for

clergymen's daughters. That school was a story in itself. Later it was to become substance of fiction and fact in *Jane Eyre*. Meanwhile two of the small girls died within a year of tuberculosis, which being translated was neglect, lack of food, and cold, at the school for the daughters of clergymen. Twenty years of a life that could be called no less than a long fight the sisters went through, to prepare themselves to be teachers, sometimes at home in England, sometimes over in Brussels, drinking the "cup of life as it is prepared for governesses," queer, awkward girls whose clothes were fashioned after some forgotten mode, who never fitted in with other pupils, but clung desperately to each other.

After years of dreamy preparation when they came to the time of setting up a school on their own responsibility, it was a complete failure. The little parsonage housed an old father growing blind; a brother who had been discharged from his position because of an intrigue with his employer's wife, and who was now ready for whisky, opium or suicide, which ever came handiest; and a group of desperate girls. Three wretched years filled with anguish over the disgraced brother, with anxiety concerning the father, with poverty and hard work followed. Yet there must have been compensating elements found in the brain fervor that took possession of the girls. Each of them began a novel; Emily wrote *Wuthering Heights*, Charlotte *The Professor*, and Anne *Agnes Gray;* Charlotte went on to *Jane Eyre*. And by two years all of the sisters were in print, though the girls had masked their sex by sending manuscripts out under the names of Currer and Acton and Ellis Bell—ambiguous names. No one could tell whether they were masculine or feminine. So did their sex inferiority complex balance with their consciences that would not let them lie to the public. *Jane Eyre* struck instant fire. But whatever their literary fate, the sisters were to

know no personal joy. Just about a year after *Jane Eyre* saw the light, the miserable brother died; Emily, the immortal, the intrepid, the impassioned, followed him in a few months, and Anne died in the spring. So Charlotte and her father were all the Brontës left. And Charlotte dropped her masculine *nom de guerre*, to re-edit her sisters' works, to write *Villette* and to get a breath or two of companionship with Harriet Martineau and Thackeray and such as they in London.

Of the novels of the three Brontë sisters, *Jane Eyre* has held its ground through the long years, even as it led in immediate popularity (and at its birth it left *Vanity Fair* a slow second in popular favor). One can imagine the inner defiance that urged Charlotte Brontë to choose a heroine who should be, like herself, shabby, inconspicuous, plain of face, just as she flouted the world in *Shirley* by using her world-tortured Emily, as a model, but surrounding her with all the glory and success that the world had refused the actual dead beloved sister. Emily may have been, as critics seem to think, the greater genius of the two, but Charlotte holds our hearts. Only a few years were given to her of contact and success, and it is interesting to see what an impression she made on the others—and they were great others—whom she met.

Mrs. Gaskell never saw the like in any other human creature of the eyes that seemed to have a lamp behind them, and George Eliot said of *Villette*, "There is something preternatural in its power." But Thackeray, the worldly wise and hard to dupe, wrote these words in his *Roundabout Papers*. "Which of her readers has not become her friend? What a story is that of the poets in their solitude yonder on the gloomy northern moors? One thinks of that life, so noble, so lonely—of that passion for truth—of those nights and nights of eager study, swarming fancies, invention, depression, elation, prayer; as one reads

the necessarily incomplete teaching and admirable history of the heart that throbbed in this one little frame . . . this little speck in the infinite universe of God—with what wonder do we think of today and with what awe await tomorrow."

Just a fragment of romance, too, was Charlotte's, such a taste as was denied to the brief lives of her sisters. Rev. Arthur Nicholls had been quite a persistent suitor, denied by Mr. Brontë, but finally given grudging possession of his Charlotte, though at the last moment her father decided not to go to the church to see them married, and there was agitation as to how this woman could be given to this man with no one to do the giving. Charlotte was very happy and in love. Mr. Nicholls, however, had no regard for his wife's literary pursuits, and was quite assured that it was more important that she should make him a good housewife than that she should go on producing masterpieces. The author of *Jane Eyre* was docile and content. Perhaps fate was kindly, after all, though it startled Charlotte, when within a year of her marriage she faced death in her turn.

"Early she goes on the path
To the silent country, and leaves
Half her laurels unwon,
Dying too soon!"

Matthew Arnold sang of her. But one wonders how long old conventions, Nicholls-treasured, could have held fearless genius in chains, had she chanced to live. And what kind of love was that of the Reverend Arthur that had no inkling of his beloved's greatness.

No greater contrast could be imagined than that between the sources of the author of *Jane Eyre* and the author of *Adam Bede*. Mary Ann Evans was well and placidly bred, trained to her church, her French and German, her house-

hold arts, even to expertness in butter and cheese-making; getting her continental journey; started early in such scholarly paths as led to the translation of Strauss' *Life of Jesus* and Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity;* settling down at about thirty to be an assistant editor of the Westminster Review. Rather a prosaic external life one might call it, except that it had the constant titillation of intellectual interests and contacts. One stirring question came into it. According to hide-bound English law, George Henry Lewes could not get a divorce from his wife. Lewes had already become one of the outstanding men in the circle of London letters, a philosopher, a scientific man, an author, and, as every one who knew him testifies, a most delightful human being with a smile that was worth a fortune. There was everything to bring such a man and such a woman together, and after very weighty deliberation they decided to come together, and whether the rest of the world would consider them husband and wife or not, so to consider themselves. Mr. and Mrs. Lewes they remained to the day of his death, twenty-four years later. Gradually their friends, and then the whole outer world that lay at George Eliot's feet gave her the privilege it often concedes to genius. As for themselves, they always felt that they had committed a technical wrong for the sake of a permanently rewarding good. They had given each other the thing most worth while. Nearly all of the novels that came out under the name of George Eliot—for so even she half apologetically masked her sex—are dedicated in one way or another to her husband, *Adam Bede*, "a work which would never have been written but for the happiness that his love has conferred on my life"; *Middlemarch* "in this nineteenth year of our blessed union."

George Eliot working all the morning, getting a breath of fresh air in the afternoon, seated evening after evening in the same comfortable chair beside her fireplace and glow-

ing into a smile when a friend came in, is described again and again by such as knew her: a huge, almost leonine head, that seemed as though it must rest above a big body, and continually startled one when she rose and showed the slender little woman's frame; features carved on the same impressive model as Dante's and Savanarola's, but softened into delicacy by something frail and feminine.

Wonderful evenings those used to be. Often there was reading and frequently it began with some passage from the Bible, which she loved for its beauty of word as well as for what it had meant to generation after generation. Conversation ran along great topics, and her voice was delectably soft, her sentences as well etched as though they had been deliberate, though she had no touch of egotism or self display.

She had all a woman's craving for love, a passion for love, from father, brother, husband. Nor had she any self-assurance, but demanded, as it were, to be buoyed along by Lewes's faith to try her hand at fiction.

He peddled her first efforts, *Scenes from Clerical Life* to Blackwood's Magazine, and George Eliot's fame was made. All the emotion of her she poured into her characters; and Lewes and she used to read her manuscript and laugh and weep together. When she wrote *Romola*, it drained her so that she said, "I began it a young woman and finished it an old woman."

Tremendously interested in the new currents of science and philosophy that were gathering momentum in the period we so gaily stigmatize as the Victorian Age, and being herself a woman and a professional woman, George Eliot could hardly escape the urge toward better educational work among women. She was among the first English women to make a contribution to Girton. Her second husband, the husband of a single year of her old age, her biographer, records the reason for her interest in education.

It was not mere mental activity she coveted. "She was keenly anxious to redress injustices to women, and to raise their general status in the community. This, she thought could be best effected by women improving their work—ceasing to be amateurs. But it was one of the most distinctly marked traits in her character that she particularly disliked everything generally associated with the idea of a "masculine woman." She was, and as a woman she wished to be, above all things, feminine—so delicate with her needle and an admirable musician." This last statement is probably accountable for the entirely unnecessary incident at the end of *Adam Bede*, when Dinah, quite one of the most wonderful of women "called" to do distinctive work, willingly gives up her preaching when the church begins to get alarmed about feminine prerogatives—a little touch of conservatism on George Eliot's part, belonging to her time and not to her immortality.

But after we have gone the way from *Evelina* through *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Cranford*, *Jane Eyre* to *Romola*, we shall hardly be content to dismiss them all with a pirouette and a lilt, even though it come from Gilbert and Sullivan:

> "That singular anomaly, the lady novelist,
> I don't think she'll be missed,
> I'm sure she'll not be missed."

Most luminous of the stories of women writers of Victorian times is that of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, like George Eliot a slip of a creature, top-heavy as to head, slender in body, dependent on her affections, scholarly in a simple, unselfconscious way that had no pose, no effort to be brilliant. The daughter of a rich man, she became a half invalid, and after she had watched, helplessly, the drowning of a brother whom she adored, an invalid indeed.

Her Hebrew and her Greek and her dipping into ancient lore became her substitute, through her brain, for the active life that she thought was denied her. Then came Robert Browning, pushing his way past nurse and tearing her routine. If she had expected to make the acquaintance of a fellow craftsman, she must have half suspected this impetuous Romeo of insanity. He would have her and he would have her at once. Timorousness and infirmity be hanged! An incensed father commanded her to give up all thought of marriage under the good old penalties of disinheritance and exile from home. She had been content to slip downward to her grave.

"Guess now who holds thee? Death! I said. But there
The silver answer rang, 'Not Death, but Love.' "

No other tie or fear or duty could take precedence, and she stole away to the lover, to new life in Italy, to motherhood and to as perfect years of marriage as the world records. She has left herself laid bare in the *Sonnets from the Portuguese*,

"I love thee freely, as men strive for right;
I love thee purely as men turn from praise;
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with the breath, smiles, tears
Of all my life!—and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death."

And he answered her in *One Word More* as to his "Moon of Poets," and also in a hundred indirect ways that have made him, above all poets, most generous and understanding toward women's finer possibilities.

Their own times were perhaps more immediately responsive to her work, than to his, *Aurora Leigh*, *Lady Geral-*

dine's Courtship, Casa Guidi Windows, The Cry of the Children. His supremacy was to come later.

Here is the immense significance of these love stories of men of power for women of unusual abilities—Pericles and Aspasia, Gracchus for Cornelia, Abelard for Heloise, Lewes for George Eliot, and most tender of all, Robert for Elizabeth Browning. They are the high lights, and as such catch the eyes of all the rest of us, of the "increasing purpose" that tends to keep the glory of young passion permanent through years of a warm comradeship that absorbs the mind and spirit to its service, along with the body; the thing tragic Mary Wollstonecraft and Mary Shelley and an enlarging body of men and women began to vision from their several angles. Evolution strikes a few dramatic previsional notes and then goes back, as it were, to bend itself to the long slow task. Such marriages need not be of poets or of genius only, but the literary output is, as it were, self-advertising. It calls attention to its own story. It makes of itself a huge element in the heritage of the rest of us.

Meanwhile, during these years and walking side by side with women who were revealing themselves and their women's point of view were a great multitude.

Charles I's edict opened the stage to women actors, first, perhaps, playthings and scintillations from the court. Girls of beauty and ability or even of mere hunger for publicity came crowding in. But soon there were not only such as Nell Gwynn, but also Mrs. Siddons and Peg Woffington.

The arts in which spontaneous self-expression is the first element of popular success began to swing their doors open a crack and then a little wider and wider. Not only actresses, but dancers, women singers, women painters, multiplied on the face of the earth. They "had it in them," but no one came sooner than themselves to realize that

they needed training. What George Eliot had said beat upon the consciousness of every woman who wanted to do anything. They were almost all amateurs, by the very conditions of centuries. They must cease to be amateurs in this world of competition.

The achievements of individual women struck sparks out of old conventions. Florence Nightingale was as nearly worshiped as is possible. Her hand had been that of mercy. She cried out for training for women in nursing, for the sake of men. Elizabeth Fry began to visit prisons, jeered at at first, but soon listened to by all people and by Parliament itself. Frances Mary Bass became the apostle of secondary education for women, for even their beginnings were a hopeless mess. Soon colleges were printing extra copies of examination papers, and allowing girls to be tried out—though of course with no idea of receiving credits—heaven forbid! Most of the girls did badly. That ought to have settled the matter. Women were incapable of higher education. But the question would not down.

To all these conditions and the way out, we shall have to come back since the same difficulties and the same solutions pushed themselves into the foreground in America.

But every woman who did a fine piece of work in any branch of human thinking or doing, dropped a weight, small or great, into the scales of that blind lady, Justice, to tip them farther and farther toward that balance when women should have a part chance of being wholly human beings.

One likes to finish a chapter on English women with a man.

John Stuart Mill was too illustrious a political economist to be ignored. When his *Subjection of Women* appeared in 1869, it scattered like fireworks. "The subordination of women is a unique relic of an otherwise exploded world of thought and practice." "To give free play to women's

nature, can never lead them to act contrary to their nature." "Legal equality, besides being the only just relation for both husband and wife, is the only means of rendering the family a school of moral cultivation." "The ideal marriage is a union where each can look up to the other and each lead and follow in turn. Whatever prevents this relation is a relic of primitive barbarism."

Appalling things to be said in the world of little more than fifty years ago. And the Victorian period drew to its close. The two outstanding eras in English history were already named for women rulers, the Elizabethan Age, the Victorian Age. Both were great because they had been times when the spirit of men had a chance to stretch itself; when social growth and industrial growth loomed bigger than politics and war. There was in them a touch of the feminine in a masculine world.

Chapter XIII

FOREMOTHERS

In these days of roaring traffic and crowded cities, it is no small feat of the imagination to project ourselves backward and visualize what it must have meant, even more to a woman than to a man, to be a part of an infinitesimally small band, facing absolute loneliness, sea and forest and strange rivers, fear and wild animals and wilder savages, sickness and hunger, and, worst of all, the unknown. It would seem as though the Lord must have created a special breed of people to be pioneers. They are among the intrepid ones of earth.

Our common picture of colonial times is of communities, small to be sure, but with a certain fineness of life, etherealized here by religious passion, colored there by cavalier traditions, manifested here through the self-restraint of the Quaker, there the daring of the Dutch. Clothes, whether for men or women were picturesque, homespun and damask, buckles and knee breeches and panniers.

But there was another side. Before the fringe of settlements had attained to the dignity of villages—frontier enough to satisfy the most adventurous, one would think—the westward push began. Trappers and hunters streamed out into the wilder wilderness; they threaded their way into Kentucky; they penetrated the Ohio Valley; they followed the Mohawk Trail. On their heels, before the country had got past the hunting and trapping stage, came farmers and home-seekers. Sometimes bride and groom alone, sometimes a huddle of friends, made the expedition, but

always it was a fighting hazard. Guns and hoes went together. Every new log house was a little fortress, prepared to barricade its door and filled with peepholes through which to shoot. Every village was a bigger fortress. Every cavalcade of wagons and horses was ready at any moment to stand and fight. Every girl and woman must shoot as well as her men and must be trained to the alertness of eye and ear of a sentinel. Wives wielded axes and carried rifles. It was hard and dangerous and exhausting. Why did they do it? Well, if they had not, we should still be a fringe of towns along the Atlantic Coast.

This was breeding valiant women. Every day was too pressing for complaint or for thought about the abstraction of life and justice. Things had to be done by the minute. Perhaps there was a half-cellar bedroom where children could be tucked at night, and when her husband was away, mother sat on guard above in the darkness, knitting but with eyes alert for a prowling Indian. Mrs. Dustin, with two other women, was carried away captive by the savages. It was she who plotted their escape. It could be accomplished only by killing their captors, as a blow that wounded but did not kill might have caused outcry and an unequal battle. So, in the night, each woman was given her tale. "Each with a tomahawk strikes vigorously and fleetly, and with division of labor,—and of the twelve sleepers, ten lie dead," all but a wounded squaw and a child. "The love of glory next asserted its power; and the gun and tomahawk of the murderer of her infant, and a bag heaped full of scalps were choicely kept as trophies of the heroine." Then a stolen canoe, a paddling down the Merrimac, and home. Bancroft tells the story.

In 1672, four men and the wife of one of them went to hunt up on the Kennebec River, with guns, fishing gear, traps, axes. Mrs. Pentry dressed like her husband in deerskin tunic and breeches and leggins, and like her husband

she could shoot and fish. They built a two-room log cabin, and then, on a day, it was decided that the four men should each take a different direction on an exploring expedition. The woman, at home, slipped out in her canoe, shot a moose, and then fell asleep in her boat, close in shore. There had been weeks of safety. A soft splash roused her, wide awake instantly, as an Indian struggled, grinning maliciously, out of the water. Mrs. Pentry shot him dead. But immediately from behind, she felt a heavy hand on her shoulder, and wheeling she faced another enemy who laid hold of her canoe to drag it in to land. A side blow with her gun sent him reeling, and before he could recover himself, she had seized her paddle and was out into deep water. A hasty dash of powder and shot, and a priming (what clumsy things were those fire-arms when life depended on haste), and her second enemy lay dead. But Mrs. Pentry was not through yet. The fact that two hostile Indians had dropped upon their peace set her worrying about her husband; so she landed, discovered the remains of a camp fire that alarmed her still more, took up the trail through the forest and finally came up just as the battle was on, two Indians, back to her, against a white man over beyond the trunk of a tree. One Red man she shot through the lungs. "The other Indian at the same instant had fired at the white man and then sprang forward to finish him with his tomahawk. Mrs. Pentry flew to the rescue and just as the savage lifted his arm to brain his foe, she drove her hunting knife to the haft into his spine." Edward Pentry was wounded, but his wife staunched the blood with forest-gathered styptics and so helped him back to their cabin and his returning friends.

If these stories were solitary or exceptional, they would not be significant. But all the colonies resounded with the same kind of tales. Family records and letters are full of them. They were told around hearth fires at our national

beginnings, dreadful bloody-heroic tales of valiant women standing beside valiant men. William H. Fowler has gathered a great volume of them.

Law! Yes, the ancient brutal law that chained the married woman came on to Plymouth and Jamestown and Philadelphia with every ship. But Mrs. Dustin and Mrs. Pentry and ten thousand others did not know that they were legal nonentities. There was a tradition that a man could count on his wife.

The young colonies bore also another kind of gallant women. The heroines of the spirit were no less intrepid.

To a simple frame house on the corner of School and Washington Streets, where the city now roars past, Boston women used to walk through marshes and fields twice a week to hear Mistress Anne Hutchinson talk about religion. For the sake of that religion, she had crossed the Atlantic Ocean in the wake of John Cotton, stern old preacher that he was, out of old Boston to the new. A rarely fascinating person Anne Hutchinson proved in the days when theology was one of the most absorbing of daily questions. The women were not the only ones to be lured by her. Young Sir Harry Vane, governor of the little colony (who was to fail of reëlection because he had fallen under Anne's spell), William Codlington, who was going to be governor of Rhode Island when Massachusetts grew too narrow for him, Rev. John Wheelwright and even John Cotton himself, foremost preacher of Boston, helped to crowd her parlors. The trouble with her was that she discussed the pronouncements of the clergy instead of submitting unquestioningly to whatever came down from the pulpit, and in those days ministers of the gospel were potentates and not to be subjected to independent judgments, especially when those criticisms were from the mouths of women. Mistress Hutchinson had an impertinent way of rising, turning her back, and leaving church when Parson Wilson began to

preach, and things came to a pretty pass when other women followed her example. Mistress Hutchinson was an Antinomian, one who held that faith alone was necessary to salvation. It might be unobjectionable when women talked over such things to themselves, but for a woman brazenly to enter into theological disputation with men—ah, that was beyond endurance. The unpardonable sin was for a woman to be cleverer than a man. John Winthrop, defender of the faith of old Boston, argued gravely and, it is to be feared, dully, while Anne gave rapier-like thrusts of wit in reply.

There really was a good deal to be said for the other side, for a weak frontier settlement needed solidarity. This factional dispute went so deep into the community that it became entangled with dissensions that had nothing to do with "grace" and "faith." August magistrates were affronted by "Hutchinsonians." The affair got itself interwoven with taxes and troop-levies. One can not blame the authorities for deciding that it must be rooted out for the sake of public peace. Of course, the Hutchinson defiance and the punishment took on the magnificence of martyrdom —of the martyrdom of a woman—and religious intolerance sat ill on the shoulders of those heroic settlers who had come to this side of the water to defend the liberty of the human conscience. The emotional side of history is all on Anne's side. The followers of Mrs. Hutchinson became a great and powerful faction in a settlement that founded itself on doctrine, and when John Winthrop became governor, there were trials for sedition and contempt. The colonials, as has been said, "fled from religious persecution, and came over here to enjoy it." At last Anne herself, breeder of dissensions, was brought before the governor and his judges on a dull November day in the little log meeting house in Cambridge. What had she done? Were there not suggestions from Paul to Titus that the elder

women should instruct the younger? Some one drew a chair up beside her loneliness there in her simple Puritan dress before men in ruffs, serried upon their platform. It was John Cotton himself, the great. But when she claimed revelations and threatened judgment against persecutors of the truth, she called down her doom. The room was crowded—the faces of everyone of note in the small colony, faces half curious, half hostile. Commitment to the house of John Weld in Roxbury, isolation from her friends, constant visits from questioning clergy, these were to precede banishment, and when spring came she was summoned to a day-long and soul-wearing series of public questions before the church. Her adored Cotton turned against her. Wrangling, and recrimination, and retraction, and retraction of retraction wore her out. After excommunication from church and from Massachusetts, smugly pronounced by her worst enemy, John Wilson, she went out from the meeting place, the "American Jezebel," alone except for one woman who stepped to her side.

Mary Dyer kept pace with the discredited woman. The day was close at hand when she too would stand before judges in old Boston, and when she would be hanged on the Common because she, a Quaker, defended the "inward witness," the personal assurance that meant more to her than any decree of men.

Anne Hutchinson said to Mary, "The Lord judges not as man judges. Better to be cast out of the church than to deny Christ." Meanwhile, the husband who had gone to look for a refuge where he might share her banishment, spoke of his wife as a "dear saint and a servant of God."

Down in Rhode Island, where variations of belief were not clouded with infamy, Roger Williams welcomed this famous adherent of her own form of faith, the mother of fifteen children, the visitor of the sick, certainly as good a neighbor as she was theologian. Here her husband be-

came a magistrate. After his death, she moved on into New York, probably to Pelham Manor. In 1643, the Indians fell on the frontier settlement, and Anne Hutchinson was massacred with her whole brood, except one child who was captured. Back in Boston, pulpits resounded with jubilant sermons on this judgment of the Lord on the daring, the witty, the indomitable, the woman who ventured to think for herself and to stand by her own opinions.

A soul-satisfying thing it is to witness the judgment of the Lord upon one's adversaries. Of course, when the case is reversed, it is always to be remembered that whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth. At any rate, Anne Hutchinson's fame remains. Moreover, the Indians slew a few perfectly upright and unblemished Puritans.

Nor was independence of thought the only matter that raised women apostles in the colonies. Political questions were to the fore.

Anne Hutchinson had maintained her dominion by swiftness of her intellect. Down in Maryland, Margaret Brent added to her brains that charm and beauty that have always dazzled the eyes of men so that they could not see beyond. In every age women have used them as a disguise for the self-determination that men never quite suspect to exist behind that ultra feminism. "Do not be deceived by curls and dimples. I tell thee that babe is a thousand years old."

When Henrietta Maria was queen and Charles was king, Lord Baltimore, under a royal grant, sent three hundred settlers to a land of beauty and summer, softer than grim New England. They brought Baltimore's brother, Calvert, to be their governor, and they brought, too, a priest to lead the Indians into the fold. Margaret Brent and her brother, Giles, came a little later, and the beautiful girl became so engrossed in the intricate difficulties of building up a new land, and trading in cattle, and planting new-ploughed

fields that she laughed at lovers. Not only love she won, but high esteem, so that when Leonard Calvert lay on his death bed he summoned her together with the Thomas Green, whom he named his successor as governor, then turned in the presence of the small gathering, pointed at Margaret and said, "I make you my sole executrix. Take all and pay all."

Before an astonished and uncertain little public quite made up its mind, Margaret had made up hers. She took over the Calvert mansion and moved in. She began to collect the profits that were due to pay off Calvert's debtors. When murmurs arose as to the legality of her acts, she went straight to the court of the new province and demanded recognition as attorney of the Calvert estate, nay more, she won recognition as attorney of the far-away Lord Baltimore, owner of Maryland. Nor did Margaret stop even here with the administration of monies and lands. Lord Baltimore had a right to a vote in the Assembly. Leonard Calvert had a right to a vote in the Assembly. She, as representative of both, had a right to two votes—so ran her reasoning. She was beautiful, she was eloquent, she was determined, she was subtle. It was being whispered throughout the province that Mistress Brent might be a better governor than Thomas Green. It was in 1648 that this first demand for a vote for a woman was made before the Assembly of Maryland, and Governor Green, a rather weak man, turned as weakness often does when cornered. Without giving time for discussion and perhaps an undermining of masculine austerity in the presence of feminine cajolement, he pronounced judgment: said Mistress Brent should have no vote in the Assembly. What! lay on you women the terrible burden of political responsibility? Dear lady, let us do it for you!

All very well to deny her the august name of Assemblywoman, but when trouble arose, Mistress Brent was the

first person to whom Governor Green turned. The straggling army that protected the colony was in revolt for its pay, and there was no money to meet their demands. "Take all and pay all," Calvert had said. Without hesitation, Margaret sold cattle belonging to the estate of Baltimore; she reduced the soldiers to order and to the much-needed service. Slowly the tale of these doings crossed the Atlantic by sail, and Lord Baltimore was amazed and indignant at the things this unknown female was doing in his name. He sent peevish messages to the Assembly, but the Assembly replied with seeming gallantry, but really with a facing of bare facts. No one in Maryland could have met the situation so well as Mistress Brent; no one could have commanded such civility and respect; no one deserved more in the way of "favor and thanks" from his lordship.

So long as she lived, whatever Mistress Brent willed, always saving the right to vote, was done in Maryland, and she was always to the front. When she was fifty-eight, she made her last appearance before the Assembly that would not grant her place to sit, though she might stand before it. One Thomas White, gentleman, had died and left her his entire estate, because of "his love and affection, and of his constant wish to marry her." So ends Margaret Brent, suffragist and efficiency expert.

Small wonder was it that by the time the Revolution began to loom before our ancestors, the colonies were filled with wives and mothers of the same calibre as their men, and quite as belligerently patriotic. As all through history, the women urged defiance, heroism, self-sacrifice. Whatever attitude they assume between wars, when the blow falls, their vehemence has always broken bonds. There is a long panorama of them, fighting women, planning women, women who thought out the situation.

Legend has it that Mercy Warren (delightful name)

was the first to whisper the word "separation" and to talk about "inherent rights." Like other women of her time, this sister of James Otis, orator and rebel, had practically no education, except that as a child, she had the fortune to fall into friendship with Rev. Jonathan Russell, who set her to reading history and filled her mind with philosophy. But so wise and clever a lady she became that Samuel and John Adams, Gerry, Knox, and other budding statesmen were among those who asked her advice. Political theories were the game of the day; and Mrs. Warren was an adept in thrust and parry of poignant argument. She passed on her suggestions to the gentlemen. She wrote *The Ladies of Castile*, which drew from Alexander Hamilton the statement that "female genius in the United States has outstripped the male," and made John Adams say that England had no poetess to prefer to us. But unfortunately, these masterpieces have dropped into limbo. Mercy Warren saw her own time in the light of the classics, and filled her letters with allusions to Greek and Roman liberties, but her wisdom had in it certain ancient qualities of the serpentine variety, for she not only advised politicians, but she declared that women should affect to be "inferior" because it pleased men and did no harm. "Seldom has one woman in any age acquired such ascendancy over the strongest by the mere force of a powerful intellect," said Mrs. Ellet, who lived near enough to their time to make her records of our foremothers convincing.

Legend, and legend with very good backing, also has it that Washington and Robert Morris (who was to do the difficult work of financing the Revolution) paid a visit in early summer of 1776 to Betsy Ross, skilled needlewoman of Philadelphia and asked her if she could make a flag; that she suggested several changes in Washington's design, making a five-pointed star, arranging the stars in a circle, adopting better proportions; and that she then, and her

daughter after her, became the makers of flags to the coming republic.

The daughters of adventure blossomed during the Revolution, who followed the army to make soup and care for the sick, bare-footed, grimy, with unkempt hair, through long hot days. Moll Pitcher saw her gunner husband shot down and leaped to take his place:

> "Moll Pitcher she stood by her gun
> And rammed the charges home, sir;
> And thus on Monmouth's bloody field
> A sergeant did become, sir."

A proud man was her husband when he recovered, and when Washington (whom Moll had once called on for help in lifting a big kettle off from the fire) asked that his men might "have the pleasure of giving madame a trifle," and invited her to review his troops. Long after peace settled on the land, Moll was buried with military honors.

There were feminine Paul Reveres, such as Lydia Darrah, a quiet little Quakeress, in whose Philadelphia home high councils were held by British officers, and who slipped down from her bedroom, listened at the key hole (not to hear good of herself, but certainly to hear good for the benefit of others) and made sure of the plans for attacking Washington's army out at Whitemarsh. She would not even tell her husband these military secrets, lest she jeopardize his safety, but with perfect simplicity got a pass to go outside lines to secure flour, and then pushed her way on, until she might meet an American officer to be trusted with the precious word that saved a surprise attack and annihilation. "We have been compelled to march back, without injuring our enemy, like a parcel of fools," grumbled the puzzled British officer. Who could suspect a

sedate small lady, bosom crossed by white kerchief, face of unlined placidity? Yet all history might have taught men to beware of the demure woman.

Nor was it necessary—thought Royalist officers in South Carolina—to maintain discretion in a settlement of sympathizers and in the presence of a girl of seventeen. So Dicey Langston learned of the raid that was planned by the "Bloody Scout" against Elder Settlement, where her brother was in hiding with other rebels, and was off in the night, through miles and miles of forest and marshland, dark and almost without trails, and at last the swollen river Tyger, not easy to ford in daylight and in its normal current. It came up to her neck, and the waters roared in her ears, and her feet felt stumblingly after the channel. Perhaps Dicey Langston in the Tyger is no less heroic than Horatius struggling with the Tiber, though of course petticoats do not make the appeal that armor does. Dicey reached her goal wet and tired, to find men who almost grumbled at the task she set them of spreading alarm in all directions. They were played out. They were hungry. ("Dat's de fust word de man said, and I boun' ye it's gwine to be de las!" said the old darkey.) So Dicey helped make a fire and cooked them a hoe cake to put hot into their pockets as she drove them out. When the Bloody Scout came along, there were no rebels to be found.

Mary Slocumb can hardly be left out from among the characteristic undaunted souls among women, who when her lovely country home was taken as Headquarters by Colonel Tarleton—in North Carolina this time—played her part as a dignified hostess, but never lost a chance to thrust a barb into the skin of her enforced guests. An excellent dinner Mrs. Slocumb provided, and it is rather interesting to find out what constituted a standard meal in those days—boiled ham and greens, turkey and sweet potatoes, boiled beef and sausages, baked fowls, pickles and stewed

fruit and dessert. Doubtless the redcoats were packed to their limit. The wine was good too, so that Colonel Tarleton was pleased to discover that it came off the estate, and reminded his followers that doubtless all this part of the country would be apportioned among them when they had conquered the Americans. Mrs. Slocumb here, from her place at the head of the table, joined in the conversation.

"Allow me to observe and prophesy that the only land in these United States which will ever remain in the possession of a British officer will measure but six feet by two."

"Excuse me, madam. For your sake I regret to say—this beautiful plantation will be the ducal seat of some of us."

"Don't trouble yourself about me. My husband is not a man who would allow a duke or even a king to have a quiet seat on his ground."

Mrs. Slocumb's activities were not limited to words. These were but the insults by which she surrounded whatever injuries she was able to inflict on her guests. Once Mrs. Slocumb had an intuition that her husband was wounded—dead—and she rode all night until the sound that she knew must be the roar of cannon beat on her ears. And behold wounded soldiers who needed water and wounds dressed; but her premonition was all wrong. Slocumb was off fighting as he should be, and chasing a fleeing enemy. As she was lifting one wounded man, she looked up, "and my husband, bloody as a butcher, stood before me."

" 'Why, Mary!' he exclaimed, 'What are you doing here—hugging Frank Cogdell, the greatest reprobate in the army?' "

" 'I don't care,' I cried, 'Frank is a brave fellow.' "

These stories, and a hundred more like them, make one feel as though the Revolutionary War was an affair almost

domestic, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters with a joint piece of work on their hands.

Or there is Elizabeth Zane, just home from school caught with her brother in one of those frontier half fortresses, half log cabins, when it was attacked by an Indian-British force. Men were few and precious. There was a store of gunpowder about sixty feet beyond the gate, and the question was who would venture out, exposed to fire, in a desperate attempt to bring it in. Then rose Elizabeth. Her life was of comparative unimportance. She would bring in the powder. And bring it she did. The Indians paid small attention to this sally of a slip of a girl, but when she started on the return journey, powder tied up in a tablecloth and fastened to her waist, the bullets began to fly, and Elizabeth came in on the run, safe. The garrison was armed to await the relief that came not long after.

Of course, the most precious of all Revolutionary women was Martha Washington herself. Perhaps it is true that General Washington kept an abiding passion for the beautiful and fascinating Mary Phillipse, whose husband and herself were attainted for treason because he remained faithful to King George. It is, of course, the price paid by greatness to be forever pursued through life and death by all past acts and even suspicion of acts, especially if there is a touch of human weakness in them. We demand that all heroes should be demi-gods. So people whispered about lovely Mary, and young Washington who had been jilted. One may speculate as to what difference would have been wrought to himself and to America and to all the world if the youthful soldier had married a belligerent royalist who captivated his very soul, instead of a sane, lovely, dignified, clear-minded woman who stood by his chosen career, rebel, patriot, statesman, idolized American. Fortunately, the General made a devoted and a gallant

husband to the Martha whom he married, and she made a great lady and a helpmeet who never failed him at his beginnings, during his struggle, when he was the most distinguished in the land, or in the quiet days of age, overlooking the Potomac and summer life, as the illustrious farmer of Mt. Vernon.

She, too, made a family matter of war. In her plain brown gown, so simple that she might have been mistaken for a very inconspicuous person, she was at Valley Forge through the winter, living on salt herring and potatoes, setting an example of frugality and work, and ministering to the sick, a living model to the ladies of lesser men gathered also in winter quarters.

Human rights were like a flame to the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth. But it did not occur to most of the deeply stirred of the theorizers that the discussion had anything to do with women.

Abigail Adams, wife of old John, mother of a long distinguished line, perhaps as illustrious a succession as we have in America, was a clever woman, a woman of wit, and a woman who was to fit into European courts, and into the presidential house as well as she had skimped and worked in a New England farm house. Probably John, her husband, thought it was only one more of Abigail's jokes when she wrote him about the making of the Constitution: "Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of husbands. Remember all men would be tyrants if they could." She threatened to "foment a rebellion among the ladies if their rights were not recognized in the Constitution," and assured him that "women will not hold ourselves bound to obey any laws in which we have no voice or representation." Of course, it was not a mere pleasantry, but Mrs. Adams was too deeply immersed in the daily job, the bringing up of a big family, the playing

her part in greater and greater positions before the world of politics and society, to start the threatened rebellion.

Sister under skin to the New England Abigail, was Hannah Lee Corbin, who got a better response out of a southern gentleman when she protested to General Lee that women should not be taxed without the right to vote. He replied that they already possessed the right. He made the mistake of supposing the Declarations of the Constitution meant what they said, and that women, being human beings, were included in their magnificent idealism.

Here were the very elements out of which the mothers of young America were bred, strength, courage, swiftness in meeting emergency, simplicity, and the deep-rooted tradition that work and vicissitudes were to be met by men and women jointly.

Chapter XIV

WOMEN PUSHED OUT OF THEIR HOMES

A MISCELLANEOUS assortment of adjectives might be selected to describe the young republic of the United States of America, but perhaps none would be closer to a fair generalization than "homespun." The first problem both men and women had to meet was how to get what was necessary to life—economic pressure.

Damask and lace, shoe buckles and brocade were of the old world. Economically we were absolutely dependent on the mother country. Bricks and even nails came over from England. At home, the fringe of townlets seized upon the first material that would give them shelter as quickly and with as little labor as possible, food for their mouths and covering for their bodies out of materials that lay close at hand.

> "Fishers and choppers and ploughmen
> Shall constitute a state.
>
> Go cut down trees in the forest
> And trim the straightest boughs;
> Cut down trees in the forest
> And build me a *wooden* house.
>
> And here in a pine state house
> They shall choose men to rule."

The greatest and most aristocratic shared in the democracy of labor and of dress. Mary, the mother of Wash-

ington, came, after the seven years of his long fight, to witness his triumph in her plain gown, and to say, "I am not surprised at what George has done, for he was always a good boy." He himself reverted, as soon as his days of public duty were done, to the gentleman-farmer life, dignified in administration, stately along with its thrift, open in hospitality.

Martha Washington kept sixteen spinning wheels going in her home and turned out her own and her servants' material for clothes. The dress of this first of first ladies of the land, as it exhibits its solid and simple lines in the collection of dresses of Presidents' wives in Washington, is typically and even insistently American, adorned with embroidered flowers and insects of the new country, as a visible manifestation of her patriotism. Mrs. Logan of Philadelphia gives a charming picture of the better-class home: "The spinning wheel was going in every house and it was a high object of ambition to see our husbands and families clothed in our own manufactures (a good practice which my honored husband never relinquished) and to produce at our social dinner parties the finest ale of our own brewing, the best home-made wines, cheese and other articles which we thought ought to be made among ourselves rather than imported from abroad."

Spanning the times of colonial life and the young republic came the first of important American business women, except perhaps Margaret Brent, who had run the affairs of Lord Baltimore so admirably, and so autocratically. Miss Lucas, far less an autocrat and far more just girl, was really a prevision of today, a gay, charming, insouciant creature, so absorbed in the joy of her work that she was rather bored by the beaux who surrounded her, but gave herself with enthusiasm when the right man came, and that man no less a person than Charles Pinckney, Speaker of the House of the Assembly of South Carolina

and soon to be Chief Justice. Miss Lucas' father had been obliged to go to Antigua for a government appointment, and she stayed behind—she a sixteen year old—to run his three plantations. It was not enough to satisfy her merely to keep the daily routine going. Her imagination reached out into new lines. Every bit of jessamine, every mocking bird, and every little pickaninny was dear to her. She must study plant life, and very soon she was applying her new-found knowledge to the ever-present question of the colony—how shall we build our economic security? She planted groups of oaks against the day when oaken timber should be in demand for ships, if not in her generation, then in the next. She experimented with cotton and ginger and alfalfa and most successfully of all with indigo, which she helped to leap into such prominence that before the Revolution the exporting of it was bringing the colony over five million dollars a year, so that Miss Eliza had made a substantial contribution to the comfort of her colony. She gathered her negroes to teach them to read. Many business affairs were loosely done in the new settlement, and the girl used to run over to her neighbors, Colonel and Mrs. Pinckney, for help in informing herself about the law. She set up as a notary—a female notary before the Revolution! —and, as she herself said, learned to "convey by will, estates real and personal, and never to forget, in its proper place, 'him and his heirs forever.' "

An insatiable reader Miss Eliza was, also, and in danger of having her Plutarch thrown out of the window by one elderly dame who feared for her mind if she kept up the dangerous habit. Had not Governor Winthrop's wife gone crazy from writing poetry and so interfering with men's affairs?

Withal, she dearly loved a dance and a pleasant flirtation. And when neighbor Mrs. Pinckney died, she could not resist the charming widower who had taught her and

laughed with her through her girlhood. And one suspects that he had been decorously enchanted by her through these same years. Two notable sons she bore to South Carolina and to the country, for Charles Cotesworth and "Tomm" both fought in the Revolution; the first a member of the Constitutional Convention, special envoy to France, and Federalist candidate for presidency in 1804 and again in 1808; the second, governor of South Carolina, minister to Great Britain and to Spain, member of Congress, and, like his brother, Federalist candidate for the presidency. So perhaps this blue-stocking business woman was not so unbalanced after all.

In the good old days (and by the way, one would be grateful to any one who would give us the dates of the good old days when all the world was busy and virtuous and happy) while every man's home was his castle, every woman's home was her factory. So it had been for thousands of years, and if, perchance, the home was very grand and rich, one chief difference lay in the fact that there was a chance for elaboration of dress and of food and delicacy of design and fabric. On this side of the water, we remained primitive after industrial affairs had begun to grow complicated across the Atlantic.

There are those that say woman is the natural drudge. From the beginning, men went out and did the things in which there was excitement such as hunting, fishing, killing, while women stayed behind in cave or tent or hut and repeated the monotonous acts, which she still kept going when her lord came back to lounge around in idleness and gossip about the great and weighty masculine doings. So men began early to specialize, and women began early to plod. Perhaps his superior strength gave him the privilege of selecting such occupations as seemed to him amusing and leaving the rest to become women's work, and so to create that vast nebulous goddess that is worshipped in many

climes and in many times under the name of Woman's Sphere.

If you read some such book as Mrs. Stowe's *Oldtown Folks*, you get a cheerful impression of family life centered around a hospitable and industrious hearth. The flax wheel was humming and the wool was being brought in. Next winter there would be warm, comfortable husband and children. The clicking of knitting needles underran all conversation, and the nose was a center of delectable dreams built up out of the fragrance of cider and mincemeat that came through the door. Occasionally a bit of a delicacy or a shawl or a piece of china came from an adventurous relative who sailed the Seven Seas.

Our visitors who came from a more developed civilization sometimes drew less pleasing pictures of an un-understandable situation. Mrs. Trollope, for example (and there were many others), describes our home industry civilization thus in her *Domestic Manners of the Americans:* "In America, with the exception of dancing, which is almost wholly confined to the unmarried of both sexes, all the enjoyments of the men are found in the absence of the women. They dine, they play cards, they have musical meetings, they have suppers, all in large parties, but all without women. Were it not that such is the custom, it is impossible but that they would have ingenuity enough to find some expedient for sparing the wives and daughters of the opulent the sordid offices of household drudgery, which they almost all perform in their families. Even in the slave-states, though they may not clear-starch and iron, mix puddings and cakes one half of the day, and watch them baking the other half, still the very highest occupy themselves in their household concerns, in a manner that precludes the possibility of their becoming elegant and enlightened companions. In Baltimore, Philadelphia and

New York, I met with some exceptions to this; but speaking of the country generally, it is unquestionably true."

All the labors on which the family depended for warm clothing and good eating were women's work, contributed to the whole group but not paid for, unless, in time of stress, a village tailoress, widow or old maid or something forlorn, was called in to be paid seventy-five cents a week and her board and keep, though even back in the sixteen hundreds Mrs. Mary Avery, and in the seventeen hundreds, Theodora Orcutt made good wages spinning.

But time was rushing on. Industry got too big to sit by the kitchen fire. It went out and demanded roofs all its own, and power, ever more and more power, stronger than a human hand, water and steam. One after another women's jobs were taken away from them, leaving them sometimes half idle, sometimes dismayed, and often desperate as to how they could live. For now hand-made gave way to machine-made, and machine-made things were paid for. People were faced by a terrible situation. Could things that were paid for be included in women's sphere?

As industry moved out of the home, there were many men who objected to taking over the whole support of their women relatives. Women always had contributed to their own maintenance. Why not keep on? Daughters and sisters and nieces became "encumbrances." They must choose between being paupers or wage earners. And if they accepted wages, were they taking bread (in other words money) out of the mouths of men.

By and by there came a time when every occupation that had been hers was lifted out of the stigma of drudgery and given the self-respecting name of labor—except one, housework. That still remained rule of thumb and appropriately feminine and inside the circle of her sphere. Drudgery. Nowadays, under our very eyes, even that is

in process of transformation until it too shall become recognized as skilful, professional and money-worth.

But each and all of her ancient jobs, changed now into something new and strange, whether in factory or office, became a strong rope to drag her out into a bigger world, whether she would or not, whether the rest of society liked it or not. She had to get out. Everything from bread-making to interior decoration was professionalized. She was an amateur. And an amateur can not compete with a professional very long.

Way back in 1789, Mistress Betty Metcalf discovered how she could make herself a straw hat—a precious and ravishing thing, generally to be got only by way of Europe. Meadow grass, Mistress Betty found, could be bleached and even dyed, and flattened out by an adroit thumb nail. Every one wanted straw hats. Eleven years later, twelve thousand Massachusetts people were making straw hats, seven thousand of them women, but they did not work round a hearthstone.

Waters were rushing to the sea, none more picturesque than the Merrimack River, when Kirk Boot came along and bought up strategic falls from unsuspecting farmers (who afterward felt he had cheated them outrageously) and began to build factories, and pay cash for workers. Down from Vermont and New Hampshire and in from Massachusetts flocked girls from farms, under that mighty lure, money, real honest-to-goodness money in the hand. Most of them had never had a penny in their lives. Covered wagons disgorged them with bandboxes and funny little trunks covered with hair skins, shawls over their heads, to be replaced by shaker sunbonnets after their first wages were received. One might roll the names of them like sweet morsels of ancient sugarplums under one's tongue: Asenath, Elgardy, Triphena, Ruhamah, Almaretta, Sarepta, Florilla, Samantha, big-eyed with curiosity

about the world and thrilled at the prospect of independence or the helping to pay for the farm or the possibility of saving to send *brother*—brother, mind you, not sister—through college. Five o'clock in the morning to seven at night were the work hours, and the wages went up sometimes to four dollars a week. Girls who had been "encumbrances," shy and self-depreciatory, became producers, wage earners, and most marvellous of all, spenders. Of course, they had no property rights, and it might be well, if they were young, to get their time, that is, a quit-claim from parents to enable them to receive their wages. Sometimes a deserted wife, who, alas, could not get her freedom so easily, found her husband coming around at intervals, as was his perfect right, to collect her wages and then disappearing again until he needed more. But on the whole, this flood of girls, the best in blood and tradition, was as soul-stirring as a girls' college of later days. "Acres of girlhood," Whittier is quoted in Mrs. Robinson's *Loom and Spindle*, "beauty reckoned by the square rod—miles by long measure! the young, the graceful, the gay—the flowers gathered from a thousand hillsides and green valleys of New England, fair unveiled nuns of industry, sisters of thrift, and are ye not also sisters of charity dispersing hope and happiness around many a hearthstone of your native hills, making sad faces cheerful, and hallowing age and poverty with the sunshine of your youth and love!" And Mrs. Robinson, who was one of these early factory workers, gives us a story of President Jackson's visit to Lowell in 1833. "On the day the President came, all the lady operatives turned out to meet him. They walked in procession like troops of liveried angels, clothed in white (with green fringed parasols) with cannons booming, drums beating, banners flying, handkerchiefs waving. The old hero was not more moved by the bullets that whistled around him in the Battle of New Orleans than by the ex-

hilarating spectacle here presented, and remarked, 'They are very pretty women, by the Eternal!' "

There was great agitation in those days lest men be drawn in large numbers into mills. There was a continent to be subdued. That was man's job, not puttering over spindles and looms. To be sure, the bosses were all men, who, it was suggested, might "improve their health" by doing gardening in their leisure hours. But it was wonderful to have found something that would save the myriads of women, whose occupations were slipping from them, from becoming public charges. They had to be fed and clothed, by *someone*. Here they could feed and clothe themselves (and save a bit, remember, to help brother's education). By 1846, a third of the money in the banks of the young city of spindles belonged to girls. To our ancestors, idleness was one of the unforgivable sins (pretty wise old ancestors up to a certain point) and here was the great preventer of idleness among women and children. By 1831, it was calculated that four million dollars a year were earned by thirty-nine thousand women—a clear gain to the country. Children in factories (five A. M. to seven P. M.) were made "virtuous and industrious!" Hamilton felt that factories would make *women* productive and so add to *man's* income.

England was trying to keep the secrets of her inventions from us. She forbade the export of machinery and tried to keep her expert workmen at home, but American inventiveness was stirring. Things were not so good at first. Mrs. Robinson was one of the first to buy a dress of calico cloth—about as solid as sail cloth—put out on a new loom and dyed, madder background with white dots, by American dyes. But alas, the spots wore out and left her a dress full of eyelet holes.

The first girls were a marked group, intellectually hungry, to whom the mill opened the doors. Lowell buzzed

with "improvement circles"; Lyceum lectures on serious subjects were crammed by maidens with notebooks; transcendentalism and theology and anti-slavery made tender morsels for discussion; new books were gobbled up; poems were pasted on the frames of spinning machines to be learned by heart while working hands flew. Literary expression began to demand its way. *The Lowell Offering* came into existence and made such a sensation that young men came to hunt for wives who could really write such poetry and essays. And it was published exactly as they wrote it, with no revision! Mirabile dictu! Lucy Larcom was among the poets of America.

Down at Fall River, things did not go quite so smoothly as at Lowell. Girls were paid in goods at the company stores, and among the first heroines of women at work is Hannah Borden. Hannah was a pacemaker. She could weave thirty yards a day, and no one turned out better work. They would think a long time before they discharged her. So feeling sure that there was something doubtful about the way her wages were swallowed up in purchases, she demanded to see the company books. Quite a tempest in a teacup! But she won her point, and when she saw herself charged with suspenders and rum, declared that henceforth she would be paid in money—and she was. Money wages became the rule.

The trouble about human affairs is that just as soon as they are adjusted, they begin to unsettle themselves. The factory as a kind of education, an introduction to a large, free-thinking world, was evanescent.

More and more ways by which women could earn came into being, and the fine daughters of New England farmers grew less contented with crowded quarters, twelve sleeping in a room, and unsanitary working conditions. French-Canadian girls, Bohemian women who were skilled before they came and who worked at home in what we have learned

to call sweated labor, Russian Jews, Irish and South Europeans came in.

Labor became a problem. For women it was complicated by the influx of new populations, factory populations, and by the everlasting difficulties that circled about home. Women were willing to eke out incomes by using spare hours to make garments or hats or shoes, women on far farms to whom goods already cut or prepared might be sent for finishing or stitching, women in crowded tenements. The eternal old goad that first made woman a laborer nagged her now, necessity for herself or for her children. And the weakness of child-bearing, having to mingle home duties with these new outside demands, her amateurishness, her competition between girls who were in the world of industry as a mere temporary makeshift and those who were desperately serious about it, all these tangled her footsteps and kept her wages lower than men's.

And stronger than all other impedimenta, women have had to fight tradition, than which no man knows a mightier force. When women were first placed as clerks in English stores, other women refused to trade in those shops that outraged all modesty! Mrs. Dall tells of a Mary Patton, who sailed a ship around Cape Horn in a storm, and saved life and property. "More shame to her!" cried a Boston girl when the story was told. "Better that they should all have gone to the bottom than that one woman should step out of her sphere!" (To this day there are no women sailors listed in the United States Census. But Mary Patton must have known something of seamanship.)

Every step that women have taken in the world of "gainful occupations" has been accompanied by this trepidation lest, at last, they should be plunging over the precipice, and womanliness—sometimes merely a synonym for femaleness—should at last be shattered.

Year after year, very swift in their changes, greater num-

bers of women have been pushed into this world of competition. Their efforts at self-protection in industry have been slower than men's for the same reasons that have hampered them in other ways.

Women in industry have been drawn from as many nationalities as our population itself, more and more and more, until now there are over eight millions of them, two millions of them married women, a large proportion of them with dependents, children, parents, husbands. Fewer and fewer are gainfully employed because of pin-money. The pressure for earning a living grows more determined. Yet, when in 1909-10 the first great strike was organized by thirty thousand women in the shirtwaist industry, and young women from colleges chivalrously went in to help them, these "privileged" girls were impressed with the thinking, the character and the general information of the young strikers. Nor was there so much difference in kind between the early Lowell girls and the more recent Jewish group of artificial flower makers who paid out of their slender wages to have some one read aloud to them while they worked quietly.

A certain great employer of women objected to the remark made by a visitor about his "factory girls." "Madam," he said, "I have no factory girls! There are many girls working in my factory."

This pressure has meant a constant state of flux in the situation, with a tendency to increase women in what one might call the more comfortable callings, professions, clerkships, better-class factories, and a falling off in such occupations as domestic service, agriculture and animal husbandry. The census of 1920, with its page after page of lists and figures going into detailed analysis of "gainful occupations" shows only here and there a blank on the column labelled *female*. Men still hold down boiler making and brass working and roofing, the job of locomotive

engineers, and a few more trades and industries, but the gaps, namely occupations where there are no women listed, are very few.

Modern days have had their heroines in labor, too, like Agnes Nestor, glove worker, who has so identified herself with the effort of women to better their own working conditions that she has been an outstanding figure in the Women's Trade Union League which came into existence in 1903, to stand for equal pay for equal work, for a minimum wage scale, and for citizenship for women. Miss Nestor was made, by President Wilson, a member of the Commission for working out a system of Vocational Training, went to Vienna, to Great Britain and to France on international conferences and study, and, during the World War, was called to Washington to head the work on Women in Industry under the National Council of Defense.

Stories soon grow obsolete in this changing world, but they show our milestones. Miss Nestor tells gleefully of her first call to speak before the Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs. It was an innovation. She went to trouble to get a white shirtwaist for the occasion when shirtwaists were "the thing," a waist trimmed with pink. And the result was a doubt in the minds of the women before whom she spoke as to whether she was a really, truly working woman, and a notice in the paper about the drab, inconspicuously-clad but adventurous speaker.

An exgarment-worker and shoemaker now heads the Women's Bureau in the Department of Labor.

Behind their efforts is the determination that life shall not be crippled to meet the demands of industry, but that industry shall be so adjusted that it shall serve life. Most of the girls who flow through industry are going to marry —if they meet the usual fortune; and many of the women already in are mothers. Now the man who is hurt by industrial conditions is injured to himself, but every mother

to be and every mother that is, when she is warped in body or mind, injures the whole race. So, important as it is to guard men in a society that believes in the individual, it is even more important to guard girls and women in a society that believes in its future.

It is a pleasant story that records the first patent ever issued to an American, back in colonial times by the Government of Great Britain to one Thomas Masters, planter, of Pennsylvania, for an invention for curing and cleaning Indian corn, "found out by Sybille, his wife." Women as inventors were as scarce as the proverbial hen's teeth for a hundred years of our national life, but during these later years patents by women have leaped much faster in proportion—though still actually only few—perhaps five hundred a year. Of course, household appliances are the things they have chiefly thought about, but there is a somewhat astonishing assortment of other fields in which they have tried their hands; mining machinery, chemical products and processes, automobile parts (including the windshield wiper), firearms (cartridge tube filler and single trigger mechanism), surgical and medical equipment, sugar cane stripper.

All these things; the number of women who work; the multitude of things they do; the tendency toward group self-realization; the growing inventiveness; are straws that show the wind; but he would be a daring and super-wise prophet who could tell exactly in what direction it blows, or to what shore.

Woman, the bread-maker of æons, finds her job taken by bakeries. Woman, the washer and cleaner, sees her occupation passing into laundries and cleaners. Woman, the home nurse and doctor, finds a profession absorbing her ancient place.

What is she to do? To do something is the eternal demand of normal humans. It looks as though the economic push were behind all other pushes that thrust her

out from home walls. The distaff gives way to the spinning jenny. All modern calls for women to be doing things are coupled by demands that she be educated and trained. What wise old Harriet Martineau said back in 1859 is truer than when she wrote it: "A social organization framed for a community of which half stayed at home while the other half went out to work cannot answer the purposes of a society of which a quarter remains at home and three-quarters goes out to work." The amateur is in a bad way.

All phases were but facets of a single situation. Women (who have lost their ancient economic position) were obliged to compete in a world in which they were not fitted to compete. They must learn, therefore, to be producers after the fashion of the modern world and not after the manner of the Middle Ages. They must have education in a society where men were educated they must have specialized training in professions; they must face even human kindness and human relations in a new way, for these had now ceased to be little intimate neighborliness, taken on scientific dignity and were dubbed sociology. At home (many men grumbled) women were no longer assets but liabilities. The word "parasite" was snatched from plants and animals and applied to women! (But, curiously, these weapons that herded them out of homes came back like boomerangs to drive them back again. There will be something to say about homes grown wider and deeper a little later, and the woman under her own rooftree, not a parasite, but a creator.) Moreover, when, a little dazed, they were pushed into this wholly new set of conditions, they found law and laws buffeting them first on one side and then on the other. Very well, then they must also attack the question of changing the law. They must have the stamp of political position guaranteeing, like a great seal of state, all other positions.

Because some women saw one phase and some another, a thousand approaches were made, but very soon they realized that no one of them could do much alone. Teamwork among women became nothing less than a phenomenon.

In Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*, most dramatic of all paintings, where in the midst the Judge sits with lifted hand of finality among the great crowded host of angels and greedy demons and tremulous souls, down in a lower corner there creeps up from the earth a creature with a kind of cowl drawn over its eyes. It is quite unconscious of all the vast play of destiny above it, self-absorbed, only dimly aware of the fact that it too is to move into that concourse. A suggestion here of this groping of women into out-of-door light. Meanwhile, from above there come derisive cries. A ribald voice calls, "First let women prove that they have souls. Law and the Church have always denied it." This the demon voice. But how does one go about proving that one has a soul? Puzzle picture. Find the soul. (How would any man demonstrate it?) The women knew no other proof than the "inward witness" as the Quaker would say, and by living as though they were soul-endowed beings. On the other side come oily voices, "You are all soul, and no sense, you women. You are sweetness and light. Your sole function is motherhood; your only virtue obedience. No matter if your husband is a drunkard, a sensualist, a brute, a moron. You owe submissive duty." Meanwhile the women were drawing deep breaths of the outer air, catching a dim glimpse of the Judge with upraised hand, beginning to suspect that their place was up there with the spirits celestial or demoniac or human. The urge was of the very elements in which they found themselves, stronger than any one of them or than all of them combined.

Chapter XV

MADAM SCHOLAR, MADAM DOCTOR, MADAM SOCIOLOGIST

"JOSEPH Wright's wife and Allen Converse's wife were able to divide between them ten shillings for the year's work" of teaching a dame school back in 1635. And at that, we are not sure that they earned their pay. Their job was to "learn them good manners and proper decency of behavior." Schooling for girls was not of considerable moment in the plans of our colonial ancestors.

Girls might be taught to read at home or they might not. Even where schools came into being the term of teaching was only a few weeks so that our friends, the Lowell girls who worked in factories often gave themselves a little change and vacation by teaching during the year. A maiden had to have a real and devouring intellectual appetite for knowledge to lift herself to an intellectual plane. How she did it, we see in women like Eliza Lucas Pinckney or Abigail Adams or Mercy Warren, by listening to the talk of intelligent men, by making friends with the minister, by borrowing books. And yet there were all the time women thinking keenly on great topics. They had to be eaten up by the fervor of it. In the best families "female education went no further than reading and arithmetic," Mrs. Adams wrote. "If we mean to have heroes, statesmen and philosophers, we must have learned women," she further said, who knew just how hardly she had won her own wisdom. And it was many centuries since Aspasia had said the same thing.

Mercy Warren grew in unaccountable ways up to her

judgment that adapted the principles of liberty as Rome had fought for them, to the situation of thirteen weak little colonies, and gathered the thinking and perplexed men of the day about her.

Dolly Madison would seem to have snatched from the very air her wit and tact and wisdom that made the little court in Washington fairly scintillate, and enabled her to appreciate values so well that she risked everything, when the British were burning the White House, to cut the portrait of Washington from its frame before the flames should destroy it, and compelled her to go back, when it seemed too late, to rescue the text of the Declaration of Independence. "Everyone loves Dolly Madison," said Henry Clay to this most popular woman who ever ruled in the White House. "Dolly Madison loves everyone," was her reply—the real explanation.

In 1788, Northampton, where Smith College now stands, is reported to have voted that it would not waste town funds on the education of girls. But about the same time, President Stiles of Yale, who had interested himself in the mature young lady, Lucinda Foote, twelve years old, reported that she was—except for sex—quite qualified to enter college. He devoted hours of his time to Miss Lucinda to give her an education equal to anything a boy might get in early New England, and she rewarded him by marrying and becoming the mother of ten sturdy children, to prove that the female sex was not wholly disqualified from its main job by mere "book larnin!"

"Over the left" was the education given girls, sitting on the schoolhouse steps and listening to the recitation of boys going on inside, being permitted to have classes during the summer months when boys were working afield. Well on after the Revolution, nine years was old enough for a girl to be studying.

There was a grim and wonderful old Sarah Knight, an

adventurous soul, who made the journey from Boston to New York and back all alone, taking five months for the trip, and who taught Franklin and Sam Adams, with a switch behind her chair, manners and morals and scriptures along with A. B. C.

But the economic leaven was awork. By hook and crook, girls were learning, and in their turn becoming teachers. That was a good argument put up in Rhode Island in favor of a normal school for girls—that this would make it possible to get two well trained women teachers for less than it cost to secure one inferior male. Such a plea was sure to work. In fact, it still works. Sects that were "queer", Moravians and Quakers, showed their erratic ways by giving their girls chances like their boys. In 1852, Boston gave girls a high school.

Fortunately, the outstanding American apostles of education for girls were women (with glorious backing by men) and among them Emma Willard—born just as the Revolutionary War was ending—stands first in order. She began teaching at seventeen, and she kept on, to help out her husband, who was in money difficulties. The thing that ate into her was her handicap as against men teachers. She "felt bitterly the disparity in educational facilities between the two sexes, and hoped if the matter were once set before men as legislation, they would be ready to correct the error." Any wandering adventurer might set up as a teacher of girls. "The daughters of the rich are frivolous, and those of the poor, drudges." Governor De Witt Clinton, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, were enough impressed by her plea on behalf of a state appropriation, to enter the lists for her. There was a fluttering of hope when the State Senate of New York voted to give two thousand dollars, but depression followed when the Lower House cast out the bill. Moreover, she did things that called forth gusts of public laughter. She even examined a young

lady in geometry! Then the people of Troy, New York, raised a four thousand dollar fund, and the Troy Female Seminary came into being, the mother of hundreds of Troy Female Seminaries when her graduates were dropped like seed, as far off as Greece, many of them in the South, which perhaps appreciated a certain graciousness in cultivated women more generally at the beginning than did the more utilitarian North. Emma Willard's five thousand young women studied mathematics (not mere arithmetic, mind you), and natural philosophy, a delightful sort of panoramic view of all service and all thought which reminds one of what Mrs. Heywood, an English literary lady so delicately called "enchanting philosophy, its path strewed with roses."

Immortal is Mary Lyon, red-headed enough to put passion into her persistence, crude little girl from the top of a craggy hill in western Massachusetts where brooks and woodlands and fold on fold of blue mountains wrought something into her. There is a charming old miniature of her with puffy turban and decently crossed kerchief over her somber dress. She began by teaching for seventy-five cents a week and "boarding round" among the homes of her pupils, with intervals of study here and there whenever she could earn her way and tuck them in. "No one could study like Mary Lyon, no one clean a schoolroom with such dispatch."

Her passion formulated itself to found a "school which shall put within reach of students of moderate means such opportunities that the wealthy can not find better ones." And she peddled her idea everywhere, gathering here a dollar, there fifty cents, glad to get six cents. Sometimes a bit of real money came her way, until in 1837, Mt. Holyoke Seminary was ready to open, a place of almost ascetic austerity in its early days, when a student paid sixty dollars a year and helped in the housework; where teachers were

meagerly paid, for Miss Lyon would have them sacrifice willingly to help other women in an almost religious devotion; where only after ten years was Latin regularly taught and after forty years, French entered into its own. Like Troy Seminary, Mt. Holyoke was a seed-institution, whose graduates went out to teach, to scatter as missionaries, to *do* something.

Oberlin opened its doors to girls on the same terms as boys, and it is said that the first woman to gain a bachelor's degree, in 1841, received it in that lovely tree-embowered dignified town of Ohio. In Ohio, too, Antioch, under the flaming personality of Horace Mann, who had a vision that leaped half a century and a heart that encompassed all struggling humans, became a Mecca for the new girl that was coming into being, the daughter of Puritan and Cavalier and Pioneer, undaunted now like her foremothers in the face of rather a hostile world.

"To educate young women like young Men
With Young Men
A Thing
Inexpedient,
Immodest,
Immoral."

all this in deep black capitals, read the outside of a pamphlet circulated in the eighties. Then came Matthew Vassar and the first notable college for women, with Maria Mitchell, dignified type of the new scholar; came normal schools; came Wellesley and Smith and Bryn Mawr, and a myriad of colleges, co-educational or for girls alone. For decades, the college girl might almost be said to carry two equal purposes, first to get ready to earn her living (for the economic pressure was stern), and second to be a banner bearer in religious fervor. "And I heard the voice of

the Lord saying: Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, here am I, Lord, send me," as it stood out on the walls of Wellesley's old chapel, was the reaction of the mind of the early graduate. She took herself very seriously. She was usually poor. She was a little self-conscious because the world was curious and critical and ready to be hostile. One of the first pieces of work the Association of Collegiate Alumnae had to do was to make surveys and show in details and in figures that the health of college girls was above the average, therefore they were not endangering the bodies of the race and that the percentage of divorces among women college graduates was very low, therefore they were not jeopardizing the existence of the family.

But when did statistics and tables ever prove anything? They are left for people who delve and grub. One woman like Alice Freeman, a college president, yes, the devoted wife of a man as distinguished as herself, a creature perfectly balanced in brain and body and character, all wit and laughter and charm, was worth a thousand pages of cold facts. She was a perfectly normal woman raised to a high power. And on both sides and behind her came a constantly increasing number of whom one might say as a distinguished Englishman remarked when he bade farewell to a group of college girls: "Well, I've had an awfully jolly time among all you bluestockings. You're really not so bad."

A generation has settled it. One recalls those beginnings with a little tearful laughter. The struggles and fears and defiances are already amusing and also moving as befits a battle won. The young woman of today has forgotten that there was a battle. It belongs with the Crusades and the War of 1812—History. The cap and gown, the doctor's degree, are part of everyday life.

Nor was education only struggling up toward what we call "higher." No less significant than the college was

the kindergarten and its great absent-minded Elizabeth Peabody, sloppily-clothed as to her mortal garments, but shining white in the garb of immortality, who is the mother of that significant movement to study the child as he really is and to give him the thing that fits him instead of an education cut by some ready-made adult pattern.

The clothes women wore during these two or three generations of the struggle for education and for professional training bore a certain gratifying accord with the state of mind of society. These were the days when corsets pinched in waists and compelled inner organs to move wherever they found most room; of full and trailing skirts that gathered dust and mud and were perhaps stiffened and underruffled within; of tight sleeves that compelled the wearer to put on her hat before she donned her dress and so submitted to the bondage of restrained arms, sleeves that perhaps had to be peeled off and left a line in the flesh where seams had been; of tight collars, boned and constricting; of paper-soled shoes. As were the clothes, so were women, so was the man who admired them. Hats often bore no relation to the shape of the head, and the more perilous the angle, the more admirable the style. Constrictions were getting so constricted and so uncomfortable that revolution impended. But woe to the woman who defied fashion while she defied deeper conventionalities. "I always conform in the little things," said one of the most radical of them, "in order that I may do what I please in the big things—and no one will find it out."

For a widespread war was on, all down the line. One might call it the war of the professions.

A woman was beloved and feminine when she was a ministering angel, when she sat up all night with her sick husband or child, when she ran across the street to help out a neighbor's illness, when she helped children into the world according to old wives' traditions, when she

worked by rule of thumb. But the case was different when she asked permission to do these things scientifically and well. There was many a gallant midwife in ancient days. Mrs. Thomas Whitman of Marlboro, who, as busy people are apt to do, lived to ripe old age, assisted more than a thousand babies to birth. Doubtless she knew her job very well before she got to seventy-five. But midwifery became obstetrics, and that was no job for women. The unspeakable conditions, the terrible mortality among our wounded in the Revolutionary War awakened a hardy little band to the need for medical training. And as women began to look into the lives of other women—this itself a new thing in the world—they uncovered countless stories of physical suffering endured rather than go to men physicians. One would think that if there were any occupation in the world that would appeal to women, and that would appeal to men as being appropriate to women, it would be the ministration to suffering. True, very true—but not if it meant knowledge.

"If I were to plan with malicious hate, the greatest curse I could conceive for women, if I would estrange them from the protection of other women, if I would make them as far as possible loathsome and disgusting to men" (Mark that "as far as possible!" It leaves a ray of hope!) "I would favor the so-called reform which proposes to make doctors of them," a great medical journal made serious pronouncement in 1869. To confer upon a female the proud privilege of writing M. D. after her name, would be, so it seemed to the sixties and seventies, to rob every man who had struggled through a medical school, since the mere circumstance that a woman could be a doctor would, *ipso facto*, make every man's degree worthless. One saw despairing men tearing up sheepskins all down Harley Street or its American equivalents, and throwing them out of endless windows.

It was Elizabeth Blackwell chiefly who was stirring up this terrible mud. She and her sister, boarding-school teachers, felt that the restrictions placed on women in the matter of earning their living were intolerable. The possibilities needed to be widened on every side and, curiously, although medicine had no particular lure for her, Elizabeth determined to open that door. Six doctors to whom she wrote, told her that it was impossible for a woman to get a medical education. Twelve medical schools repeated the decision and sometimes added a rebuke for her temerity and indelicacy. But at last, in Geneva, New York, the men students themselves took a vote in favor of admitting her, and she secured her M. D. degree, with honor, though the ladies of the town had distinguished themselves by drawing their skirts aside and looking the other way whenever they passed this blot on their 'scutcheon. Elizabeth and Emily Blackwell went to Europe, got help in hospital work now and then, found their English sisters engaged in the same battering against ancient prejudice as themselves. Women admitted to Edinburgh were mobbed by one group of students and protected and escorted by others but finally excluded since it violated the "delicacy of feelings" of their brothers to have them around. Then back in New York, the two Blackwell sisters built up an ample practice entirely, of course, among women, established an infirmary for women and children, and at last the Women's Medical College.

But the sex question was not a sex war. Again, as since ancient times, men stood by. Dr. Sims in New York, proved a chevalier. Dr. Gleason in Vermont fought heroically that his wife might have the same chances as himself. To be sure, the Philadelphia Medical Society voted in 1859 to excommunicate any of its members who fraternized with women physicians, and it was 1879 before Dr. Sarah Stevenson was permitted to be a delegate. And the dif-

ficulties women had to face in the actual training schools were not enough. It was harder to get hospital experience than to get a degree. As Dr. Jacobi said, "The opposition to women physicians has rarely been based upon any sincere conviction that women could not be instructed in medicine, but upon an intense dislike to the idea that they should be so capable." Hustled out of the hospitals where women patients asked their presence, paying for instruction out of which they were cheated, the "doctoress" nevertheless built up practice. She was quietly, definitely succeeding. Schools were multiplying east and west, and notable women such as Dr. Zakzrewska, Dr. Sewall, Dr. Jacobi, were the best arguments. Ann Preston said to a graduating class (for there was still sex self-consciousness), "Gentleness of manner, the adornment of a quiet spirit, are as important to the physician as to the woman. Your business is not to war with words, but to make good your position by deeds of healing." Meanwhile the offer of Miss Mary Garrett of Baltimore of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars to the Johns Hopkins Medical School provided it admitted women, opened the best America could offer.

Elizabeth Blackwell died in 1910. The woman physician is such a part of our national fabric that it is hard to remember how swiftly she has come in, how she has set her stride, how human and feminine and every-day she seems.

Astonishingly, even the training for nurses had to battle against great odds. Sarey Gamp had a place hard to dislodge. The Revolutionary wives and sisters who trailed the armies were trained only by the constant need of meeting emergencies, and doing the best possible with what they could find at hand. But Florence Nightingale, as near an angel as possible, and as wise a woman as ever lived, hooted and jeered at first, adored at last, broke all

barriers by her work on the fields of the Crimean War, and came back to plead for women skilled, women organized. The Civil War, with volunteers and its huge Sanitary Commission beat the lesson home to this country. One more new profession that grew great not only in numbers but in standing, was open to women, and insisted on recognition, peace recognition in peace time, war recognition with rank and uniform in war time. The amateur gave way to the professional. We have forgotten that the nurse was ever questioned.

The courts and legal tangles are filled with cases of sex iniquity. If ever a woman needed a woman friend, it would be in her hour of shame when, before a bleak group of men, she had to unveil a story of wrong and suffering, perhaps a loathsome story. And yet the very vileness of women's tragedies was to a generation or two ago, a reason for keeping all other women away from the sufferer and leaving it to men—the same old argument used in medicine. Moreover, there was once in ancient Rome a loud-voiced, strident female named Calphurnia, a nuisance, making the tribunals resound with howlings uncommon in the forum, in the courts. Therefore women were forever excluded. That settled the matter forever, except for an occasional Countess of Pembroke and Dorset who was an hereditary sheriff in England, or a Madonna Gozzadini, doctor of laws in Bologna, or a Margaret Brent in Maryland.

In 1869, the Chicago Legal News had a small note: "Iowa has one female lawyer. In North English, Iowa County, there may be seen in front of a neat office, a sign with the following inscription in gilt letters: 'Mrs. Mary Magoon, Attorney at Law,' " and in the same year Iowa acquired another woman lawyer, Mrs. Mansfield, who with her husband was admitted to the bar with this delightful and naive interpretation of the statute on "white male per-

sons," " 'words importing the masculine gender only may be extended to females.' " If only the entire nation had been as liberally disposed as Iowa, what an amount of trouble would have been saved to suffragists! But Illinois was not so generous when Mrs. Myra Bardwell made application at the advice of her husband, Judge Bardwell, and the adverse decision of the Supreme Court apparently again made the question as dead as Calphurnia. How could a married woman be a "Maid at Laws when she was possessed of married disability in the shape of a husband?" But when Alta Hulet was shut out, although she "answered questions much more readily than the four gentlemen examined with her," she went about giving flaming lectures and incidentally gathering funds until she raised enough to put through a bill that repealed the hated law, and she was thereupon duly licensed on her nineteenth birthday.

It is to Belva Lockwood, admitted to practice in the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, that other women owe the Statute admitting women to practice before the Supreme Court. One delightful example of the biter bitten, law turned back on its own iniquities, is left us from Mrs. Lockwood, when she used the very abomination of laws that shackled women to the advantage of her client. It seemed that a "lady murderer" had shot an officer and admitted it. But Mrs. Lockwood claimed that as a married woman she was not morally responsible, that the husband had ordered the shooting, and that his wife was bound to obey. And Mrs. Lockwood won her case. The irony of a woman lawyer's plea!

Still the consciences of examining boards were troubled within, for the unprecedented is almost the impossible in the eyes of the law. There was constant battering at locked gates where one has a glimpse of startled and denying hostile faces.

And now, if perchance there is a dinner of women members of the bar in any sizable city, a hundred or more well dressed, "quite like other women," will come laughing and chatting. Many, many of them are young—and many, many of them are good looking, and many, many of them practice with their husbands. There was one notable firm of husband, wife and son. Women attorneys, even to the Assistant Attorney of the United States and of individual states, women judges, women sheriffs, and policewomen, defy the memory of Calphurnia.

That women should walk even more slowly into church positions was natural. Anne Hutchinson was without followers for a long time. And the smaller and less highly organized sects were, as to be expected, the ones to give space to the preacher. Quaker Lucretia Mott could speak in meeting without thought of sex, just as she could gather every tragic human being, outcast woman, slave, starving wretch, under her simple skirts. Antoinette Brown got the spirit of free Oberlin into her nostrils, and when she had finished her general course, announced that she was ready to enter the Theological School. There were horror, dismay, cries of protest. But the very charter of the College provided that no one should be excluded on account of sex, and in due time, her ordination, the first for a woman, took place in New York, where, at the munificent salary of three hundred dollars a year, she began her preaching as a Congregational minister. And she kept on preaching and that to real congregations who liked to hear her (and incidentally so far as the public is concerned but quite importantly to her, she married Samuel Blackwell) on until her late eighties. Moreover, the College that had once tottered at the convulsions attendant on her studying theology, found heart to give her a degree of Doctor of Divinity fifty years later.

Writing is the most self-effacing of professions while the

writer is at work, even though it becomes the most self-advertising after the material shaped in a corner slips away from its creator into the bleak world. Yet woman authors seemed to hesitate, shy finger to lip. Fortunately there were cookbooks. Many a woman, like Marion Harland, ventured on a cookbook, thus proving that she was a perfectly good female, before she branched off into more imaginative ventures. Look at the old copies of *Godey's Magazine* to gloat over the clothes, above mentioned, over the sentimentality, the faltering steps moving toward self-reliance and serious purpose.

Lydia Maria Child, with her Plato stuck on a rack over the kitchen sink so that her mind could play with the things it loved even while her hands kept at their work, ventured on *Rebels, a Tale of the Revolution*, and a *History of the Condition of Women* as well as studies in Comparative Religion, and editing a children's magazine, perhaps the first. This indicated a fairly wide range of interests. Over against her placid domesticity of daily life, is the meteoric Margaret Fuller, a tragic muse. The intimate, she, of young Emerson and Channing and Hawthorne, and a marvellous talker. In fact, to talk became so great a necessity that she gathered groups of women in classes and instructed them on all things great and high, ad infinitum (and apparently ad nauseaum to some of them) in which activity she seems to be a spiritual ancestress of many women to come. But really a very wonderful creature was Margaret Fuller, complex, always intellectually hungry, arrogant sometimes, humble at others. She edited the *Dial*, which was the voice of this American movement of which she was sometimes called the priestess, and she tried her hands at literary criticism before she went abroad to throw herself into the Italian Revolution, to marry the handsome and idealistic young Marquis Ossoli, and to meet her death in shipwreck, young father, mother and baby, on their way

back to the United States. "Altogether unique, so far as I know, among the Writing Women of this generation," said Carlyle. "Rare enough, too, God knows, among the Writing Men. She is very narrow, sometimes, but she is very high."

The so-called transcendental movement was of immense importance to women. It was gathering on this side of the Atlantic a new and fervid love of all past philosophy, and touching its expanding spiritual life with a quality all American—practical, human, democratic, related to every-day affairs, and not, like some philosophies, a remote matter of brain and reason alone. To every fact, it matched an ideal. All new slumbering forces were its meat and drink. Its highest exponent, Emerson, of the generous mind, penetrated American thinking like a kind of purer air, that intoxicated by its very freshness. He spoke the words that expressed what this push meant—toward more intelligent and more efficient and yet more beautiful womanhood. "As for the unsexing and contamination—that only accuses our existing politics, shows how barbarous we are—that our policies are so crooked, made up of things not to be spoken, to be understood only by wink and nudge; this man to be coaxed, that man to be bought, and that other to be duped. It is easy to see that there is contamination enough, but it rots the men now, and fills the air with stench. Come out of that: it is like a dance cellar." "Women are by their social influence the civilizers of mankind. What is civilization? I answer, the power of good women." "They finish society, manners, language." "Their not knowing the world, and aiming at abstract right without allowance for circumstances—that is not a disqualification but a qualification."

Came Harriet Beecher Stowe to produce the most upsetting and yet constructive of novels in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and to find herself stepping out of intensely religious

and quite provincial life into all the glories that fame could offer. Came Julia Ward Howe to write the song that men sang as they went to death;—and the train of women writers who followed, who can number and who can describe their varieties?

And at first almost on their knees, as it were, with a smoke screen of feminine interests, the woman journalists appeared. Jennie June, played with fashion and gossip and society, but incidentally, invented the big business scheme of syndicated correspondence; Mary Clemmer Ames, Kate Field, Louise Moulton disguising their abilities at first, but blooming at last, into genuine nobody-can-deny journalists—a position in which our southern sisters seem to excel, perhaps because they have the fine gift of simplicity in human contacts and the grace which means kindly interpretation added to such business ability as made Mrs. Nicholson for fifty years the controlling power in the *New Orleans Picayune.*

Already the stage and the opera and the concert hall were won, and now women were hanging pictures "on the line" at every exhibit.

One of the most amazing women who ever walked this country—and she walked it literally—was Dorothea Dix, "tall and of dignified carriage, head finely shaped and set, with an abundance of soft wavy brown hair. Next to my mother, I thought her the most beautiful woman I had ever seen." Like Mary Lyon, she deliberately kept clear of marriage because of the call to do what she felt was a holy piece of work (whether that made her less womanly, let her good works judge). But one can imagine what it meant when she came before the Massachusetts Legislature with her remarkably rich musical voice, to say, "I proceed, Gentlemen, to call your attention to the present state of insane persons confined within this Commonwealth in cages, closets, cellars, stalls, pens; chained naked,

beaten with rods, lashed into obedience." Miss Dix did not confine herself to general statements. She gave town after town that she had investigated.

"Lincoln: Woman in cage.

"Medford: One idotic subject chained and one in a close stall for seventeen years.

"Barnstable: Four females in pens and stalls; two chained certainly. Jail, one idiot."

And so down through the entire list of Massachusetts towns.

Eighteen other states and parts of Canada were as thoroughly studied, and gradually in view of this overwhelming dispassionate evidence, a wave of horror was succeeded by a wave of action. Twenty states and Nova Scotia and Newfoundland reformed themselves, gave decent housing and more humane ways of treatment to the insane poor. And far afield she went, even to Europe and to Japan until our Civil War called her home, to become Chief of hospital nurses. The kind of thing with which we grew familiar in the World War had its being, both North and South, during the time we fought each other. An order from Miss Dix to Boston for five thousand shirts arrived on Thursday. On Friday, the shirts were cut, made, packed and shipped. The Sanitary Commission and its flying buttresses raised over fifty million dollars mainly through women. "There was nothing wanting to the plans of the women of the Commission that business men commonly think peculiar to their own methods."

"Here is a woman," says Frances Tiffany, her biographer, "who as the founder of vast and enduring institutions of mercy in America and in Europe, has simply no peer in the annals of Protestantism. To find her parallel in this respect, it is necessary to go back to the lives of such memorable Roman Catholic women as St. Theresa of Spain or Santa Chiara of Assisi, and to the amazing work

they did in founding throughout European Christendom great conventual establishments."

Probably no single demonstration did more than Miss Dix's work for the insane and defective to swing us away from contentment with the kind of charity that merely doles out food and fuel. She was satisfied with nothing less than prevention of ills—construction, not patch work.

Clara Barton was the other outstanding woman brought to the fulness of her genius. She it was who started a Bureau of Records that hunted out and marked twelve thousand graves of slain men, before she betook herself to work in creating hospitals for the Franco-Prussian War. And she it was who instituted our American Red Cross and spread its ministration over all national disasters, not war alone, but yellow fever in Florida, flood at Johnstown, massacre in Armenia, famine in Russia, and tragedy at Galveston.

Nothing could have been more important to those who were to come after them than the quality of work done by Florence Nightingale and Dorothea Dix and Clara Barton. They were thorough and unremitting. They did not spare themselves. They plunged right to the heart of human tragedy. They built up a great tradition for all women's social service. Through this they were all things excellently feminine, and they asked, at first, nothing for themselves. There came a time, however, when they could not avoid the issues they had raised—how could women do these things well without training and power? How can they? asked the long train that followed them. How can they? repeated a million men who wanted this work done.

No children these women had except children of the spirit. But Jane Addams and Mary McDowell and Julia Lathrop were their lineal descendants, and now their prog-

eny is counted by the thousands, young women who are deliberately putting themselves through disciplined preparation. Never was there a time when so many young people cared, cared desperately, about the under-dog, and gave themselves to his service—and a very large proportion of these devotees of social regeneration young women. "I dare not refuse suffrage to Jane Addams, if she wants it," is the story told of one Illinois legislator.

"I should think you men would be ashamed to have the leading citizen of your city a woman," is what a visitor from England is reported to have said to a group of men with whom he was dining. "I'm not ashamed. I wish we had twenty thousand more like her," was the immediate retort.

So field after field let down its entrance bars, not always graciously, but perforce eventually. In an incredibly short time, questions that threatened to tear society have become obsolescent, obsolete, archaic. Education, medicine, law, theology, arts and letters, social service, are no longer debated ground between the sex that is privileged to wear beards but prefers to shave them off and the sex that is favored by being without them.

All down the line of achievement for a hundred years, women had been proving themselves. Constantly the argument against them was: women have no supreme genius. "Where is your Galileo, your Wagner, your Dante? To which their reply was: do not deny us opportunity because we have not shown that supreme excellence that, after all, appears only too infrequently in men. The world's work is wide and big. It has room for every bit of devoted labor and every talent. By divine right, we ask the privilege to be the best that we can be and to do the best that we can attain." Perhaps—who knows the future? It has been a tradition that men of genius have great

mothers. Great mothers perchance may breed women of genius.

In the Census of 1920, there are listed: 639,241 women teachers; 7,219 women doctors; 143,664 nurses; 1,738 women lawyers; 1,787 women preachers; 3,006 writers; 5,730 editors and reporters; 1,930,341 women in manufacturing and mechanical trades; 213,054 in transportation; 667,792 in trade; 5,304 in banks; 21,794 in public service; 1,016,498 in professional service; 1,084,128 in agriculture, forestry and animal husbandry.

Meanwhile another census is nearly due; and more women on the way!

Chapter XVI

ADDING THE VOTE

Revolutions do not always begin with a bang and an explosion. One was in process of hatching when the quietest and most broad-hearted of little Quaker women walked arm in arm with an American honeymoon-bride through a dark London street. A spectacular international convention was in session, called by the friends of the abolition of slavery, and these two had come as accredited delegates from the United States, to find that their presence stirred English representatives to their depths. "I tremble at the thought of discussing the question in the presence of these ladies, for whom I entertain the most profound respect, and am bold to say that but for the introduction of the question of women's rights, it would be impossible for the shrinking nature of woman to subject itself to infliction of such a discussion as this," and so on. To admit them would violate "not only the customs of England but the ordinance of Almighty God." By overwhelming vote women were excluded, though permitted to sit "below the bar," where William Lloyd Garrison, most distinguished of American abolitionists, insisted on sitting with them. Doubtless the gentlemen who decided this matter heaved a sigh of relief and said to themselves, "Now, that's done!" In reality, it was just begun; for the two, Quaker-capped or bride-bonneted, made up their minds to go home to the United States and start an agitation for women's rights. They would stop talking human rights or slave rights, and talk Women.

Quakers' or Friends' liberality that put no barrier before a woman, if she were "moved by the spirit," the habit of great simplicity and directness of thought that was part of the sect's tradition, and the constant encouragement that came from James Mott to his wife (and, indeed, from Lucretia Mott to James, her husband) had made Mrs. Mott unafraid, with that meek and yet indomitable lack of fear that has belonged to Christian martyrs and many another gentle soul; and she had taken all wronged and unhappy creatures to her arms, the outcast woman, the slave, the forgotten and forlorn. Two chairs always stood in the entrance hall of the Mott's home, dubbed by the family "the beggar's chairs," ready to receive the constant flow of men and women who needed help and turned by instinct to the place where they were sure to find it. Moreover, the delicate and frail-looking little woman, all the more exquisite for her plain Quaker bonnet and dove-like dress, was an orator of impassioned truths without frills, and of sweetness of speech and voice. A distinguished lawyer once fought against her side in a case in which Mrs. Mott was interested. "I have heard a great deal of Mrs. Mott but never saw her before today. She is an angel," he said. Mrs. Stanton, young, already encouraged in an amateur study of law by a father who was proud of his unusual daughter, educated at Emma Willard's Seminary, abundant, charming, just awakening to public interests was also the wife of a man who understood, and was going to keep on understanding as years went by.

Marriages of the new type, less poetic than the Brownings', but like the Brownings' combining love with loyal and comprehending friendship were rather characteristic of the women's rights movement. James Mott and Henry Stanton were not alone as life-long public advocates of their wives' work, but behind the scenes, they were lovers and husbands. There were to come Dr. Howe and Henry

Blackwell and many another. In fact, Mrs. Stanton was to be in person and in life one of the unanswerable arguments. Her plump and placid face had the look that even the unelect could not help calling "motherly", as well they might during the years that her home was filling with children, and all approved domestic virtues flowed around her days. She was a notable housekeeper, and a model mother. Moreover, Mr. and Mrs. Stanton lived on terms of such delightful comradeship that it was impossible for the enemy to slip a knife under her guard of womanliness. The two thought alike not only because she thought as he did (the traditional standard) but because he also thought as she did—but with enough interplay of differences to make their likenesses agreeable instead of monotonous. Both of them, however, were asking—Why should she, Elizabeth, of the keen mind, have been denied the college training that had been given her brothers? Why should not her property rights equal those of her men? Why should not a citizen woman vote as did a citizen man? During her long life, legislatures were to give satisfactory answers to the first two of these questions, but the third had to wait until after she died.

Meanwhile in the midst of babies and bread-making, there were hours in every day when she gathered ammunition and shot it off. Like her sisters of far away Roman times, she saw the economic side. Not more than the opponents of suffrage did she want women to become masculine. She was working to give women a chance to be nobly feminine. "That is just the difficulty in which we are involved today," she said. "Though disfranchised, we have few women in the best sense we have simply so many reflections, varieties and dilutions of the masculine gender. The strong, natural characteristics of women are repressed and ignored in dependence." "Man has been moulding women to his ideas by direct and positive influences, while

she, if not a negation, has used indirect means to control him."

Those two words, "indirect influence," became the red rag to the suffrage bull. They were tired of beating around bushes and of constant and often cringing conciliation. They would speak the truth that was in them unafraid and with power.

But most of them spoke not for themselves. *They* lived in homes of fair play. It was for the myriads of women who dared not speak and could not act, the ones who were at the bottom that they fought. And opposition came also from women who, like themselves, had what they wanted, and whose argument—so suffragists thought—boiled down to its simplest terms was, "*I* am perfectly comfortable. What is the matter?"

So Mrs. Mott and Mrs. Stanton came back to their own land with one more great purpose lying fallow.

Eighty years of focussed law-abiding political fight followed this quiet resolve of the two women unfairly pushed out of what they believed to be their proper place.

During those years, it would seem that four streams of development for women flowed parallel, sometimes so close together that their waters mingled. Certainly each of them helped to swell the tide of the others: the economic upheaval; the rising tide of education and professional training; the gradual change of laws concerning women; women's self-training in organization methods. Spanning and linking them all was woman's interest in great social questions, temperance, abolition of slavery, betterment of living conditions, and political recognition. And in all these lines, the daughters of pioneers were not to be downed. They were children of foremothers.

But it was eight years before the first fully fledged convention for women's rights was held in Seneca Falls, Mrs. Stanton's home, where James Mott presided—because—

suffrage or not—it would be queer to have a woman wield a gavel at a mixed meeting. Yet a declaration of independence for women was framed.

There were plenty of legal wrongs to back this supposedly curious, impossible outbreak of a few cranks. The old law had dragged itself around all women everywhere. To be sure, there were myriads of happy and decent homes where the question of law never bobbed up. Laws are not for people who behave themselves uncompelled. De Tocqueville, when he visited this country, remarked on the fact that there was less of the ceremonial politeness to women than belonged in the old world, but much more real respect and generosity of mind. Why not? Men in young United States all knew what it meant to have women stand by them in hardship, in vicissitudes, in swift judgments in the face of emergencies. But there lay the law, like a club, ready to the hand of any man who chose to use it to beat a woman down.

Marriage handed a woman's property over to her husband and she ceased to be able to control it when alive or will it when she died. In some states, married women, idiots and insane persons were grouped as incompetent to execute wills. They could not make contracts or transact business. Their children were not theirs, but their husband's. (There is an ugly story about a New England woman who had earned the living for her family, whose worthless husband, by his will, took the guardianship of their children away from her, who when to her dismay she found that the will stood, killed herself and her children.) Any wages they might earn belonged not one penny to themselves, but wholly to their husbands. (The Westminster Gazette tells the tale of a woman whose husband was a wastrel and worse, a woman who built up a tidy little millinery business, and retired, only to find that her husband left all the property to his illegitimate children by

another woman, and that she was penniless. The will stood. English, this, but the same thing could happen in the United States.)

During all the years that women were gathering force to plead for the vote, they were also demanding the redress of those legal wrongs, and during all those years, also, the laws and customs were certainly being modified. In many places, legislatures seemed willing to concede everything except the vote.

In 1854, Susan B. Anthony, child of the Berkshires, came into the field of suffrage, and from that time on for fifty years, its story is her story. At least, she was its prophetess, and all others, men and women, circled around her in constantly swelling numbers. She and Elizabeth Cady Stanton made an immediate alliance. Mrs. Stanton with wit and a ready pen and with a vast amount of legal knowledge and extraordinary dexterity in applying it, was the mother of a family. She did most of the staying at home and writing or gathering of munitions while "Susan B.," as she soon became, out of the familiarity of affection, stumped the country. "Miss Anthony was the connecting link between me and the outer world—the reform scout who went to see what was going on in the enemy's camp, returning with maps and observations to plan the mode of attack," said Mrs. Stanton.

Miss Anthony had begun as a teacher. She was always a rebel, and she always carried a bomb. She made what might be called her début in a State Teachers' Convention in Rochester back in 1853. There were nearly five hundred delegates there and about three hundred and fifty were women, but a Mr. Davies of West Point presided. Men made speeches and motions, men voted, and the women who had paid the delegates' fees, kept absolute silence. For two days this went on, while young Miss Anthony watched and thought. Finally there came a discussion:

"Why the profession of teaching is not as much respected as that of lawyer and minister." Then Miss Anthony stood and waited. There was a debate of half an hour as to whether she—a female—should be allowed to speak. And all the time she kept on her feet that she might not lose her place. At last she was, by vote of the men, allowed to utter what was in her, and this is what she said: "It seems to me you fail to comprehend the cause of the disrespect of which you complain. Do you not see that so long as society says woman has not brains enough to be a doctor, a lawyer, a minister, but has plenty to be a teacher, every man of you who condescends to teach tacitly admits before all Israel and the sun that he has no more brains than a woman?"

After this, women spoke in teachers' conventions, and ceased to be merely the decorations of the hall which presiding Dr. Davies had called them.

A sort of white fury descended on Miss Anthony a little later when she watched a gentle little woman, Reverend Antoinette Brown, who had been called to the platform of a temperance meeting and who rose to speak to a motion, stand for an hour and a half of cat-calls, groans, hisses and cries, "Shame on the woman!" until she finally gave up. *The New York Tribune* summed up the first three of the business sessions of this meeting. "First day—crowding a woman off the platform; second day—gagging her; third day—voting that she shall stay gagged. Having thus disposed of the main question, we presume the incidentals will be finished this morning." Of course this kind of thing was to the suffrage cause like the blood of the martyrs.

Gradually Miss Anthony concentrated and consecrated her life. She had worked for teachers' rights; she pushed through a New York bill giving women equal guardianship of their children; she had labored for temperance; she had

been with the abolitionists only to find at the close of the Civil War that her masculine friends and her party were quite indifferent to women's rights but stood only for male negroes. She felt the suffragists must be free lances, untied to any other reform.

Then came years and years of struggle, caricature, satires, rowdyism, stones from boys, jeers from men, scorn of women. Up and down the land went Miss Anthony and her cohorts. She had to earn her living as she went, and somehow gather funds for renting halls and paying for printing which went on all the time, thousands and hundreds of thousands of tracts and pamphlets covering every phase of women's disabilities. In a single winter, she got up fifty-four conventions in New York counties and got ten thousand names signed to her petition by tramping from door to door over snowy roads, sleeping in any place she could find, journeying in open sleighs and all the time earning her way. "Wanton" and "cat" and "hyena" and "crowing hen" she was called, and doors were slammed in her face by other women.

Yet all the time names were being written among the suffrage advocates, names that are classics in America, Phillips and Channing and Garrison, Emerson and Alcott among men. Men like Beecher, Curtis, Higginson, added their names to a letter to the voters of the United States declaring that "Suffrage is the right of every adult citizen, irrespective of sex or color. Women are governed, therefore they are rightly entitled to vote."

Women were gathering into suffrage ranks as men, north and south, had obeyed the call for war volunteers; and leaders were rising from the ranks by the force of their own genius.

Lucy Stone came from a Massachusetts farm. Her mother had milked the herd the night she was born, and mourned that her baby was a girl. "A woman's life is so

hard." Her brothers were sent to college, but she was told that reading and ciphering were enough for her; so she earned the dollar a week that took her meagerly and shabbily through Oberlin, while all the time the injustice of things was formulating itself, and her very schooling took an intensive study of women's disabilities. Hers the platform and the ready pen for anti-slavery, for women under the law (very far under), and for women in professions. Henry Blackwell, when she married him, would not have her sink her individuality even so far as to take his name, and Lucy Stone she remained, while the two of them worked side by side through forty years, founding the *Woman's Journal* and editing it, speaking and agitating for the reforms of the day. Gentle and almost dove-like was Lucy Stone, but it was the dove that went out of the Ark—on high quest. Many years of work for women, she knew, but her last physical movement was toward the man by whose side she had walked, and her last word the calling of his name.

From Massachusetts too came Julia Ward Howe, whose husband made his fame in training the blind and in new wise forms of philanthropy which, as a science, was just coming into being. The home of the Howes was a great salon through which Boston's group of most famous men in the heyday of transcendentalism flowed like a stream, quickening thought. She had the social gift and position that began to lure great ladies to the cause, and where great ladies went great gentlemen followed. And she also had the gift of true and penetrating expression that flowed out in *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, sung on battlefields and in darkness and at last by every child in every school—not only *freedom*, with the idea of which young United States was intoxicated, but also *obligation* about which we did less talking. "As He died to make men holy let us die to make men free." Ninety-one years Mrs. Howe lived

until she became, as it were, a living monument to all fine achievements of womanhood. There came also Mrs. Livermore of the silver tongue. It is strange—no, perhaps not strange—how all these names are mingled with the education movement, the temperance movement, the anti-slavery movement, the suffrage movement. Harriet Beecher Stowe alone of the famous abolition agitation, drew back from suffrage.

Anna Dickinson was so brilliant, so young, barely twenty, so marvellous a speaker, that when she threw herself into the Election Campaign of 1862, men wore her picture on badges instead of the party name. She could make audiences cry or laugh, and she did both. She was acclaimed as a Joan of Arc.

All these women were extolled as statesmanlike and altogether praiseworthy while they labored for a party, but when they talked about women, they were fanatical and utterly impractical. While the slavery issue and Republican victory was in the balance, they held back their sex interest for the time. "After the slave, then the woman," Wendell Phillips cried. But now they found leading anti-slavery men quite indifferent to mere females. For the Fourteenth Amendment was under consideration, and the suggestion that the word "male" should be read into the Constitution. In return, women began to pour in petitions asking Congress for an "amendment to prohibit the United States from disfranchising any of their citizens on the ground of sex," and that hereafter they "legislate for persons, citizens, taxpayers, and not for class or caste."

Up and down the land, in every state, to almost every community of over five thousand inhabitants, went the suffragists, men and women. Lectures and conventions were as thick as bees. Public speaking was epidemic in those days, and Mrs. Stanton and Miss Anthony had to compete with Ingersoll and Beecher and even with P. T.

Barnum. Many of their hearers thought of them too as a kind of female circus. The Equal Rights Society faded into the National Woman's Suffrage Association; and the American Woman's Suffrage Association came into existence with a long list of notables as the adherents.

Then Wyoming—little, far-off territory—gave full citizenship to women, and when Wyoming came into statehood, its representatives were able to speak with authority in assuring Congress that the sun and moon kept in their orbits, and men and women still loved and married and voted together in the West; Colorado came in: and Washington stated in its Constitution that "all white American citizens above twenty-one years of age were voters." One couldn't quite believe it. But at the little town of Grand Mound in 1870, the women planned cannily for a grand picnic on election day around the school house, which was the polling place. Everyone was invited to eat, and at the same time they placidly discussed all points involved in their citizenship. And so they voted. Someone ought to write "How they brought the Good News from Grand Mound to Black River," for the women of the River had heard whispers from the Mound and sent a man on a swift horse to bring them word. Along the road he came pounding, swinging his hat and crying, "They're voting! They're voting!" and teams went scurrying in all directions to bring the women of Black River to the polling place.

Meanwhile in the very capital, the second National Woman's Suffrage Convention was permitted to send a dignified Committee to hold audience with a congressional committee, Elizabeth Cady Stanton standing at one end of the table, Charles Sumner sitting at the other. Miss Anthony, Mrs. Hooker, Mrs. Gage, Mrs. Davis, and Mme. Anneke speaking. The men were "almost, if not quite persuaded."

One meteoric figure flamed through the suffrage sky and

out again. When the steadygoing suffragists met to get ready for their third national convention in Washington, the city and the government were buzzing. At the very time when the convention was to go into session, behold, the Congressional Judiciary Committee was to give a hearing to Mrs. Victoria Woodhull of the *Claflin Weekly*. She had announced herself as a candidate for the presidency in 1872—and, imagine it—Congress was giving her a hearing. A copy of her very simple clear speech lay on every desk. Every newspaper in the country carried it verbatim. Mrs. Woodhull was the most talked-of person in the United States. Her argument cut the ground from under all slow-moving propaganda. She claimed that the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments already gave women the franchise, and that Congress had merely to pass a Declaratory Act to that effect.

What else could be meant by "All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside" . . . "the right of citizens to vote shall not be denied."

Mrs. Woodhull was invited to the Suffrage Convention to redeliver her message. Such a storm arose as was never seen before—such an outcry against this woman who sat through it all like a sphinx. She even began to propose a new secession, no territorial one this time, but a withdrawal of all women to set up a complete government of their own with, of course, herself as president.

Alas, for Victoria Woodhull who now threw herself into every branch of social reform—labor, taxation, criminal jurisprudence—with suggestions that are in these later days really taking form, but then stigmatized her as a wild anarchist. Worst of all, she began to talk of a single standard of morals for men and women and to publish facts or to speak them from the platform concerning society's low-

est indignity to women. Then scandal and mud took the place of success and plaudits. She was charged with obscenity and thrown again and again into prison. Money, business, and foothold slipped away and left her defiant, at bay, still telling the truth as she knew it. Hotels refused to house her but "women must come up, or men must come down," she cried. Eight times she suffered arrest, though the government was forced to abandon its suits. She broke down physically in spite of her defiant spirit, and slipped away to England to find a new home and rest at last, leaving as a last wasp-like sting, the scandal concerning Henry Ward Beecher to which she had given publicity.

Miss Anthony would have none of her, but Mrs. Stanton was not so sure. "Victoria Woodhull has done a work for women that none of us could have done. She has faced and dared men to call her the names that make women shudder. She has risked and realized the sort of ignominy that would have paralyzed any of us who have longer been called strong-minded." In England, in respectable opulence, Victoria aided in the blameless work of helping in the rehabilitation of the Washington family birthplace—a mighty change from the spotlight notoriety of her earlier days.

But the Woodhull episode changed the course of later events. She was like a thunderstorm that cleared the air. There was a certain freedom in facing all complexities and all things ugly.

Meanwhile Miss Anthony too had defied the law and the courts. She acted on Mrs. Woodhull's interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment. She assumed that she was a citizen. She voted. On an ill-omened Friday it was, November 1, 1872, in a barber shop in Rochester, and fourteen other women with her. Together with the inspectors who had permitted the unprecedented, these cit-

izen-offenders were arrested, "elderly, matronly-looking women with thoughtful faces, just the sort one would like to see in charge of a sickroom; considerate, patient, kindly" (so said a newspaper). From ocean to ocean, from Canadian line to Mexican, every newspaper and a million citizens debated the case. Miss Anthony, before the trial, gave twenty-one speeches, on "Is it a crime for a United States citizen to vote?" When trial day came, the courtroom was crowded with distinguished men—even to an ex-President. But the judge was taking no chances. (It was said that he had written his decision before the case was tried.) He denied Miss Anthony an opportunity to testify on her own behalf and directed the jury to bring in a verdict of guilty—without giving them an opportunity for consultation—dismissed them, and imposed a fine which Miss Anthony immediately declared that she would never pay—and she kept her word. As for the inspectors, after some days in jail, feasted and glorified by Rochester women, they were pardoned by President Grant. This trial became a famous episode in American history, and the frank violation of the rights of jury trial by a judge who was supposed to be upholding Constitutional provisions, reacted to the glory of the cause.

And other women were trying out the same experiment. Mrs. Ricker in New Hampshire, whose name was properly registered and then mysteriously disappeared from the files. In Detroit, Mrs. Nanette Gardner voted in one ward and Catherine Stebbins was refused in another, which made it appear as though personal caprice rather than vast and weighty interpretation of the Constitution was involved. But the great example, second only to Miss Anthony, was that of Mrs. Minor of Virginia, whose husband, a lawyer, prosecuted her case, even up to the Supreme Court, which finally in 1875, decided that the "United States has no voters of its own creation." The Fourteenth Amendment

simply made it impossible for a state to disfranchise its citizens on account of race or color, but left them free to discriminate on the basis of sex. So now women knew where they stood. The Amendment was of no help. They must get an amendment all their own and not rely on any provision in the Constitution in spite of all its safeguards for citizens and persons.

Very well, then, what about taxation without representation? And taxes were heavy after the war between the states. Two well-to-do sisters in Connecticut persistently went through the successive stages of impoverishment when their property was sold at auction to pay the taxes they would not pay themselves, until at last they had only two cows left, "Votey" and "Taxey" by name.

Meanwhile too, other "movements" on the part of women began to contribute to the political fight. Did the laws shut women out of professions? Then they would gain the right to change the laws, and every would-be lawyer and doctor was a suffragist. Greatest of all was the temperance movement, beginning in church groups. Behind them were tales of ten thousand other women suffering from drunken husbands and sons (and still, legally, in the power of such husbands). Women who had always been considered models of feminine decorum and timidity invaded saloons to plead with men, stood up in the streets to talk to crowds in the most astonishing whirlwind of crusade emotion, until they too found in Frances Willard their high priestess and apostle, as the suffrage movement had found its in Susan B. Anthony.

Miss Willard, like Miss Anthony, turned her back on comfort and ways of charm. She was a born teacher, a born comrade of cultivated men and women, a born organizer, and all that the country had to give a woman seemed to be hers in her deanship at Evanston. When she made up her mind to give it all up: "No words can adequately

characterize the change wrought in my life by the decision I have chronicled. Instead of peace, I was to participate in war; instead of the sweetness of home, never more dearly loved than I had loved it, I was to become a wanderer on the face of the earth; instead of libraries, I was to frequent public halls and railway cars; instead of scholarly and cultured men, I was to see the dregs of saloon and gambling house and haunt of shame. But women who were among the fittest gospel survivals were to be my companions." The great Women's Christian Temperance Union came into existence—"the sober second thought of that unparalleled expression"—and Frances Willard soon became its president for life.

There is something saint-like and tragic in the way these women abandoned all personal serenity and pleasure for the sake of the sacrifice for other women, for women still unborn. It was the new asceticism, an asceticism that did not retire from the world, but plunged into its darkest and stormiest corners. In Miss Willard's life is this. "In my own quiet refuge at Evanston, where we are wont to talk of these things, I once said to Susan B. Anthony, that noblest Roman of them all:

" 'Bravely as you have trodden it, and glorious as has been your *via solitaria*, have you not always felt a sense of loss?' She answered in the gentle, thoughtful voice that we all love: 'Could I be really woman that I am and fail to feel that under happier conditions I might have known a more sacred companionship than has ever come to me, and that this companion could not have been a woman?' "

And again, to a man who said to her:

" 'Miss Anthony, with your great head and heart, you, of all women I have ever met, ought to have been a wife and mother.' Our noble pioneer answered him after this fashion:

'I thank you, sir, for what I take to be the highest com-

pliment, but sweeter even than to have had the joy of caring for children of my own has it been to me to help bring about a better state of things for mothers generally, so that their unborn little ones could not be willed away from them.' "

Steadily, by every known means of publicity and persuasion, the suffrage movement went. The World's Fair in Chicago in 1892 brought a new group under Mrs. Potter Palmer, to interest themselves in women's relation to state and society. The Susan B. Anthony Amendment had been formulated: "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." It was Senator Sargent of California who introduced it in 1878. Every year it came up to present its compliments to Congress, and to be politely or impolitely refused recognition.

The outbreak of "militants" in England flamed like a torch of encouragement across the sea. John Stuart Mill had proposed suffrage for women over there. It was "something droll" then. Now Mrs. Pankhurst's campaign that compelled attention from all the world and forced a government to make the question of prime importance, stirred women over here. We, too, began to have our determined militants, who, by President Wilson's time were to picket with banners and pound with fists on the breaking gates of congressional hesitation.

But Miss Anthony grew old. When she went to Chicago in 1895, the *Herald* said:

"Miss Anthony has grown slightly thinner since she was in Chicago—thinner and more spiritual looking. As she sat last night with her transparent hands grasping the arms of her chair, her thin hatchet face, with only her keen eyes flashing light and fire, she looked like Pope Leo XIII. The whole physical being is as nearly submerged as possible in a great mentality. It was no Argus-eyed autocrat who told

with pardonable pride last night of how her chair at every function in San Francisco was hung with floral wreaths, how bouquets were piled at her feet until she could scarcely step for them. It was a pleasing story told by a sweet old woman, of honors which she accepted for the sake of a beloved cause." Miss Anthony's eightieth birthday took on the splendor of a national celebration.

A new generation had come to the rescue. Young women, college women, professional women, business women, women of social power and wealth, women who wore not only virtuous black silk and lace collar on the platform, but the latest creation from Paris. Not only far Wyoming, and Colorado, but still further Utah and Idaho had enfranchised women. Anna Howard Shaw—Reverend Anna Shaw ordained by the Protestant Methodist Episcopal Church—had come with indomitable courage. She had herself been a pioneer in Michigan in her childhood back in '56. She had wit and infinite patience and high courage and her voice carried that emotional quality that belonged to an orator. No one could escape her laughter and her pungency, or even fail to choke up in the throat when Anna Shaw got hold of him. She presided over the National American Women's Suffrage Association for more than ten years.

In 1919 came the final triumph when Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt (of whom Miss Anthony had said, "In Mrs. Catt you have my ideal leader") carried the banner. Congress passed the amendment in special session called by President Wilson. Then came the whirlwind campaign, state by state, for ratification. Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan hastened to the honor roll. Tennessee settled it, the thirty-sixth state. It was barely under the line, for nine states still opposed it. But the thing was done.

Let us hope its archangel, "Susan B." was able to look down from a pink cloud and see it all.

Chapter XVII

COMING BACK HOME

BACK early in the eighteen hundreds, women put their market baskets over their arms and went out from home. They had to get food. Necessity forced them into mills and shops and offices. But the market place was more crowded with good things than they had dreamed: education, professions, personal dignity and political power. Now, a hundred years later, they are seen trudging back again, a little dazed by the riches that lie in their baskets, destined, as all provisions are, to go through a process of digestion and final enrichment of the human family.

Every reformer has to feel that whatever key he is trying to fit into the lock, is going—huzza! At last!—to open the portal to the millennium. If he were not so buoyed up by assurance he could not possibly keep up his impassioned energy through beginnings and through many years on, on to victory. Just before that final success, each of them really ought to be killed off so that he will not die of a broken heart when he finds that his wide-flung gate leads only to another more complicated, more arduous job.

It is fortunate the adventuring Puritans who sailed away from European iniquity to found a holy community, can not see an American Sunday. Our dear forefathers and foremothers who brought a Republic to birth were willing to lie down in graves far from homeland that, at last, the virtue and power of the common man might have its chance. The actuality of it hung rainbow-like over the transcendental period.

"Lo now if these poor men . . .
Can make just laws beneath the sun,
As planets faithful be."

But even while they saw visions, the clouds of graft and stupidity and hatred and religious acrimony, swirled around them—all of which does not prove the vision false, but definitely sets it further away on the horizon. Henry Ward Beecher proclaimed in his day that we were to have "peace from war" and President Wilson hoped for a "war to end war".

So it is with us women. Those precious ones of the past, of whom one can hardly think without emotion—dear things who battled for us in the market place and the college and the professional school and up through the courts to the very seat of government might well say, "I have fought the good fight." They were terribly in earnest and terribly sure that the single good for which they agonized —and it was agony to exchange quiet comfortable days for weariness of body, for hoots and jeers and outlawry—that single good would change the face of the earth. But alas, it needs more than a law to make a temperate world; more than amendment to make good citizens. Law, in fact, seems nothing more than a clamp thrust down on a situation to hold it where it is, before we are up and at it again on the long, slow plodding which will bring us up to standard.

The gold-digger, the flapper (who however new her name is as old as Egypt and Rome) and the vampire still ply their ancient trade—though we may cheer ourselves by the admission that these varieties of females look shabbier, show their tinsel, and are more clearly seen for what they are than ever before.

Whatever is nearest to the spirit's eyes looms largest, so the struggle for suffrage still seems to many women the

supreme attainment in all feminine history. One might, however, imagine Queen Esther, or Aspasia, or Cornelia, or Paula, or Abbess Hilda, or Isabella or Mme. de Staël—if any of them had been analytically minded about her sex as a whole, which they were not—each magnifying the value of the gift of her own age to the total; and all would be right. Each depended on the time that had gone and dovetailed with the time to come. So let us hope that they end the contest by light laughter and by joining hands for some such celestial "round-rosey" dance as Fra Lippo painted "ringed by a bowery-flowery angel brood." One would like to see Susan B. holding hands with Sappho.

But of course nothing is finished. The most ancient of processes seem to be just at their beginning. We are not yet adepts at kindergarten tasks of the soul, even though we are apparently in the high school age. That old, old lesson of self-immolation is by no means mastered. If one is sentimentally inclined, one might call it the mother-lesson, the willing acceptance of anguish for the sake of some one else, or some ideal. (Perhaps hoary sentiments are essentially true.) Nor is the most recent piece of work completed. The women who secured political freedom are not permitted to breathe a deep sigh of relief and say, "Now we can rest". They find themselves merely standing at the beginning of a long road still to be travelled. If again we translate terms spiritual into terms physical, the great difference is that now women walk the road without a multitude of petticoats that drag in the dust and tangle their steps, walk uncorseted and free of limb. Our hearts and our stomachs are approximately where they ought to be, instead of pushed about by tight clothes.

All the way along the way, while men have been dropping impedimenta, women must get rid of still more numerous and more binding chains. Shackles lie in rusting heaps by the roadside. The young woman of today steps

out with unselfconsciousness. She has forgotten those interminable wistful women of long ago who have contributed to her world, and who if they could have dreamed of it, would either have been frightened beyond measure at its unimaginable freedom or else profoundly envious. Perhaps both.

Fate's revenge is this. When other people stop forcing us to do things, we have to force ourselves. As outer compulsion drops away, inner compulsion presses hard. The price of liberty is self-control. We pay for education and training by the obligation to think more clearly and act more effectively. Moreover, the transitional period has its perplexities, confusions, and sometimes its ugliness or menace.

The family, for example, is no longer held together by authority, for ancient dominion has gone glimmering, now that father no longer owns his child nor does husband hold title to his wife. Since divorce courts cut the Gordian knots, there are no longer epidemics of husband poisoning, the last resource of Roman or Medieval desperate spouses; but it may be that this very foul plague of divorce is itself only intermediate between the outworn marriage of compulsion and the marriage that we are building toward, which holds against time by its own cohesive energy. "Convenience" or passion gives way to love that endures—the only real and binding force. We have plenty of hideous statistics about divorce. We can't get statistics about the newer kind of wedlock. All we can do is to make the acquaintance of Pericles and Aspasia, of Elizabeth and Robert Browning, of Lucy Stone and Henry Blackwell—once, in Greece, a single and astonishing relation—now growing so common that a million little commonplace couples live it.

Turn over the card that carried divorce statistics and read the inverse side. It is not so shouted about by sociologists and preachers, but it is vastly significant because it

shows the curative agency at work from the only source where it can really amount to anything, the woman herself, who holds the sources of life and the binding of lives into families in the hollow of her hand. She was pushed out by forces she could not control. She is coming back voluntarily, with her market basket full. She is weary of mooning sentimentalities about mother. She resents the kind of marriage that merely thrusts under a new roof-tree the girl who is capable of bringing young out of her animal body and then leaving her to solve the most important of all problems in any stumbling way she can. Home making—no profession at all—mere drudgery—is in process of being transformed into the profession that leads all others, to which the rest are merely tributaries.

Probably there is no one thing that women in this country are studying so much as "home economics," young women in school and colleges, gray heads in clubs and classes. Nor does it mean merely making gingerbread or trimming hats or deciding on the best covering for a kitchen floor. It began that way. It has arrived at the point where it balances all the elements that go to making up a home, and when you come to think of it, that means about everything that goes to making up society and government and industry and the life of the soul. The home economist has gathered the whole great aggregation in her ample arms. Fifty trades, all professions (and a new "ology" invented every minute) and all the imponderable things that seem tenuous at first glance and yet weigh so heavily that they swing the scales from dissatisfaction in life to content—these are the new home-maker's clay.

Her excursion into the out-of-doors and her return, do not signify that her home door is closed and that there will be no more excursions. Not at all. The outgoing and the incoming are continuous, for the biggest thing she found out was that her home was not only a spot intimate and re-

mote-from-the-world, but that it was so closely allied with that greater order that it could never escape. Society and government were rushing in on her brood all the time. Very well, then, she must play her part in society and government to make sure that their forces were health-giving and not destructive. If there is a filthy hole over there to the left (and "over there" may be as far as south Europe) how can she save her child from infection? If a red light district is lurid and alluring near her, how shall she save her boys—yes, and her girls—from its poison gas? Food and water and milk, her money's worth in silk and linen, police protection and taxes are very concrete things. Their honesty is the rock on which she builds her house. How can she keep her hands off them? These are affairs of the social order, her order, her home order, the full market basket.

Ah, but all alone, how can she touch these forces? So she beckons to another woman, and another to "stand by." This is the psychology that lies behind the great organizations of women. One group sees a single problem and takes that one job on its hands. So the League of Women Voters takes up the task where suffrage associations laid it down, with its emphasis on self-training instead of law. The Parent-Teachers Association finds that schools are not enough without understanding and coöperation. The list of women's organizations, who shall number? Among them all, the Federation of Women's Clubs is a kind of mother. It is made up largely of mothers, city and country, rather belligerently and patriotically American, moving slowly and conservatively, yet turning its eyes, as mothers should, in every direction that touches its home life, from the forests and streams through a wide arc up to art and music and literature and religion—Jewish women and Catholic women and Protestant women as a notable man said not long ago, "the only organization in the United States that faces *all* phases of human interest, without

bias, without prejudice and without self-seeking." Many children have been born to it, in many places, groups who have got their training in methods and in public interest and have then swung off to an independent life of specialization. And many new children come to it, clubs in England and France and China, in Czecho-Slovakia and Argentine and Norway. And still, in spite of busy hands, it keeps its first interest in much derided "culture"—for what is culture but an enriching of the natural soil so that it may produce in greater abundance—and how shall we enrich the soil except through the finest things that have come out of human minds. The crazy activities that disrupt society come from people who plunge into activity without balance and without thought. "Nothing is more dangerous than ignorance at work." So the club movement remains one of the greatest forces in our today, not only from its claim on three million members (for nothing is really great that lays its claim only on things that can be numbered) but chiefly because it is the greatest binding power, women with women; because it is the largest working group to create that citizenship that lies behind and below political citizenship that uses vote and trade and profession as its tools.

Very well. Has the pushing of women into industry and politics done anything except double the complications, which, heaven knows, were bad enough before? Men have made all the outer fabric of society. They laid the railroads and built the mills and laid out the cities. Our civilization is the most perfect mechanism the world has ever seen. Yet in spite of our roaring traffic and our fabulous discoveries and inventions, there has never been a time when discontent rumbled more menacingly below the crust of all the world. Things as they are prove unsatisfactory. Success travels by express, but content is on the slowest of freights.

Of course there is no final argument except achievement and women en masse have not yet had time to do much more than stretch their arms, numb from old chains. Yet men and women have certain fundamental unlikenesses (bless the Lord—Both sexes have reason to be grateful for that!). The long story of women who have broken through the crust here and there, the briefer story of the near-by actual woman as she touches civilization, do show characteristics and tendencies. From cave days, from the baby in her arms on to the man lying on the battlefield, the individual has been women's chief interest. She has been jeered at because she was always personal. She could not see vast principles. Today she is still seeing persons, always persons, but she is being forced to see the principles that brood over personal destiny. The things into which women throw themselves with new passion and power are those that touch them to the quick of this characteristic. They would transform institutions to make them human instead of mere machinery. They demand that industry fit itself to human needs instead of grinding the worker to the mould of the machine. In every town and village of these United States, you will find the women have been the chief promoters of libraries and parks and playgrounds and concerts. The froth of life?—the things that give color and satisfaction to life. Budget public money as well as house money—the woman is saying. Hogs and corn, yes, but mothers and babies too. At any time when one would get an outburst of enthusiastic response from massed women, let him appeal for education, or forests, or public health. Notice how most men quote the Declaration—"LIFE, LIBERTY and the pursuit of happiness." Then the woman—"Life, liberty, and THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS." She thinks that life and liberty, industry, and law exist for the sake of that crown of government, the pursuit of happiness. It has been so since the time of Paula,

who saw happiness only in heaven, since Isabella, who saw it chiefly on earth, when to quote La Claviere again, "Women having monopolized all that made life worth living, men one day awoke to the fact that women were the glory of all distinguished families, and that, thanks to them, life had become *an art and a passion*." Florence Nightingale and Dorothea Dix and Jane Addams belong in the same long procession. Emerson calls women the "finishers" of civilization. "But for women what men win from nature and add to knowledge would yield less *happiness* than it does," said Edward Sanford Martin.

The immediate answer of women to the challenge as to why they are here in the foreground of the social order seems this: to help humanize all institutions; to emphasize satisfactions, all the way from the satisfactions of the well body up to satisfaction of the spirit. The church has always counted on women for that, even when it kept them in the back seats and talked loudly about Eve and Delilah.

So the amateur woman grows dimmer and less reputable in the human picture, though she is still abundant in our midst. One loves the self-interpretation that is coming from some of our women poets—Margaret Widdemer's *Little Sister*, Angela Morgan's kitchen work allied to the pulse of the farthest star, Florence Wilkinson's response to all delicate forces beyond the spectrum's violet rays. The celebration of the cup custard as a "chalice of love" belongs to the modern housewife at her Nth power. And the hymning of the unborn child (never such poems written till women came to write them) is the ever brooding Mary, awed by her own kinship with creative power.

But it is to be hoped that while they are become earnest souls and skilled workers, they will not become so earnest and so skilled that they will forget to smile—as the best of them sometimes do. Happiness is, to be sure, to be achieved

only from sources that do not tarnish, that wear well. This is where it differs from pleasure that is light of foot and evanescent. But happiness is of everlasting sunshine and laughter. Women need to laugh, not at, but with the world. Ah, there's the good thing. Men laugh more abundantly and easily, and in this moving world where men and women are walking more closely together than before, where each appreciates more tenderly the gift of the other, where they look more frankly into each other's eyes—men laugh and women join in. It's a long, long way to the millennium, but my heart's right there. Probably it is a place of infinite laughter.

In the meantime, about the most joyous thing any one can have is a big hard job every day, and the courage to tackle it. No doubt we have that, we women getting in under all the case-hardened spots of the world. The young woman of today is merrily on her way—not afraid. Grandmother envies her and pushes her along.

A swift survey this has been of thousands of years of women. In a flash they have passed. Each of them, with thousands who might be looking over their shoulders, deserves the detail of line and color that belong to a completer portrait, not a mere fugitive impression. They are all very real, very human, very friendly and understandable if one could see them personally, for "seeing's believing"; while disquisitions and summings up are only meditations in a corner. So a book covets that vividness to the eye that belongs to the play and the motion picture and the painting. If only we could say of this long procession of friendly women, each with a nod and a hand wave, from Sarah in her tent to Mme. Curie in her laboratory, "I saw them with my own eyes," that would be a conclusive argument for their closeness in their lives of yesterday to us of today.

In the total, this tapestry of the heritage of women is still unfinished, yet we get clear-cut glimpses of the design to

which they have contributed, its high lights, its deep shadows, its glowing and infinitely various shades. The long centuries of the woman of self-immolation slip into those where Roman women made their stand for a place before the law, where early Christianity magnified feminine virtues, where the Middle Ages blossomed into romance and the love of woman as a soul, on into the great intellectual and social push of Renaissance and salon, up to the pulling together of all elements in industry and training, and the magnifying of the age-old function of women when her home takes on vaster significance. Delectable it is to discover that the tapestry is not a dead thing, after the fashion of mere cloth and dye, but a living and growing organism into which we other living women slip naturally to fall in with the plans of the Weaver.

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